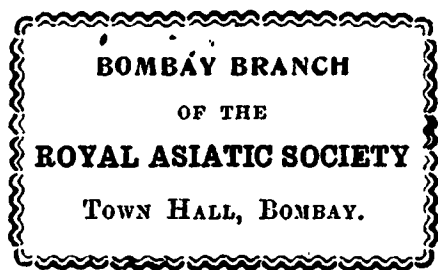




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PROVINCIAL LETTERS.



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P A S C A L .

Vide Memoir p. 365

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THE PROVINCIAL LETTERS

OF

PASCAL;

WITH

AN "ESSAY ON PASCAL, CONSIDERED AS A WRITER
AND MORALIST,"

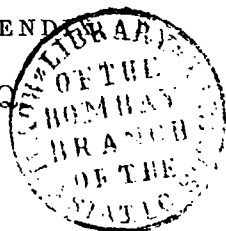
BY M. VILLEMAIN,

PEER OF FRANCE, LATE MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, &c.

NEWLY TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

WITH MEMOIR, NOTES, AND APPENDIX

BY GEORGE PEARCE, ESQ.



"Un monument qui n'est qu'une œuvre de restauration, mais qui *durera*, puisqu'il enferme les reliques d'un des plus beaux génies qui aient honoré la France et l'humanité."—FAUGÈRE.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN bringing anew before the English public the present work, the Translator feels it to be proper briefly to state the motives which have led to the undertaking.

The only translation, of a comparatively late date, with which he is acquainted, was published in London, as far back as the year 1816. The writer has no means of knowing what was the amount of popularity which that work obtained; but it seems to have, at present, entirely lapsed from circulation, it being only by accident that he was able to procure access to a copy. As a period equal to an entire generation of man, therefore, has elapsed since that publication appeared, while the great subjects of which it treats have, in the intervening years, lost undoubtedly no part of their interest or importance, it may be justly deemed not unseasonable now to recal attention to a work, which has ever held, and still

continues to hold, the highest rank among the ornaments of French literature.

The translation referred to is also singularly incomplete; inasmuch as, besides other important deficiencies, it has entirely omitted the two closing Letters, Nos. 19 and 20, of the original series. The one of these (No. 20), containing a masterly argument against the contemplated formation of an inquisitorial tribunal in France, under the auspices of the Society of Jesuits—although attributed to another member of the Port Royal, the accomplished Le Maitre*—was evidently put forth with the entire concurrence, and probably with the aid, of Pascal; and always formed part of the original publication. The other (the 19th) is a short but beautiful fragment, undoubtedly from his pen, in which Pascal bears a closing testimony to the virtues of the persecuted Port Royalists, and records his last indignant protest against their oppressions. The portion extant is composed with exquisite grace and polish—to such a degree, that, from its imperfect state, it might seem as if even *his* practised pen could scarcely satisfy itself with the performance—and it abruptly breaks off in the

* Anthony, the Advocate; not Isaac, his brother (more commonly designated De Sacy) the translator of the Scriptures, &c.

midst, probably—as it is without date—from the rapid advance of his last oppressive and fatal maladies !* These valuable papers are now supplied ; as well as the two supplementary Letters following the 12th and the 17th, which are not given in all the editions, and are thought to have been partly the work of some of Pascal's friends in conjunction with himself (probably Nicole and Le Maitre), but which are full of interest, and cannot be omitted without materially impairing the effect of the series.

The present work has also the advantage of being enriched with the Prefatory Essay which its latest and most distinguished French editor, M. Villemain, has contributed to the edition from which this translation has been made, together with explanatory Notes from the same able source. The latter will excite, in all who are interested in the period to which the work refers, regret that they are not more numerous. Of the former, eulogium would be here superfluous : it has but to be read to commend itself to every one capable of appreciating sound taste and elegant criticism.

* Fortunately the manuscripts of Pascal supply some memoranda—although imperfect and disjointed, of the course of argument and illustration further intended to be pursued, could the Letter have been completed. (See Appendix, No. 8.)

But the principal inducement to the present undertaking arises from the inadequate manner in which this noble work has been hitherto rendered. In translating a composition that rises little above the ordinary level, fidelity to the author's meaning, and correctness of language, are sufficient. But, if the work be one of a high order of literary beauty—one, whose pages delight not less from intrinsic excellence—their power of reasoning and variety of illustration, than from felicities of diction and graces of style—in such a case, the effort to do justice to the great original should rise proportionably higher. The ear should be carefully relieved from the unpleasing effect of foreign idiom. Where the genius of the native tongue has sanctioned expressions, that, in a bolder vernacular, seem insipid, they should be raised: where, to a more sober taste, the language appears too exalted, it should be subdued. Especially should sympathy be shown by the translator with the higher excellences of the original composition. He should kindle with its ardour, and rise with its elevation. In those passages, in which genius is wont to gather up her powers, and carry with resistless orce the passions of the reader—and in such passages none abound more than Pascal—on

such occasions—when the loftiest reach of thought pours its conceptions into a mould of classic beauty—he should then aim at something of a kindred vigour, and give his humbler aid to transfer with fidelity the features of his great model. His art is, after all, but an imitative one. The thought—the argument—the eloquence; the spirit and life, are all the author's. But yet, in the subordinate sphere he occupies, there is a measure of excellence to be aspired to; a merit analogous to that in the sister-arts, in which the painting or the statue will be so skilfully copied, that the practised eye of the connoisseur only can detect the imitation. The difference, however, here is, that if any measure of resemblance be achieved, no *deception*—as in the other cases—can be contemplated. The object in view is only to court respect and admiration for the master-mind that is attempted to be traced.

And if, indeed, no more than a very slight approach to such a standard as is now prescribed has been accomplished in the present work, it has been from no want on the part of the translator of an admiration, approaching to enthusiasm, for the great writer, whose steps he has endeavoured to follow; and if he should succeed in diffusing a taste for his excellences and beau-

ties throughout a larger sphere than that in which they have been hitherto appreciated, he will feel himself amply rewarded.

In another part of the volume will be found a short Biographical sketch of Pascal, together with a few remarks upon his compositions, more especially with reference to the work now presented to the reader. Occasional notes have been appended by the translator; and in the Appendix are put together some particulars relating to the persons and the circumstances most prominently referred to in the course of this volume, with documents which will further tend to its elucidation.

Blackheath, November, 1846.

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M. VILLEMAIN.

The following brief Notice of the distinguished writer of the following Essay (derived from the most authentic sources), will, it is presumed, be acceptable to the English Reader.

M. ABEL FRANCOIS VILLEMAIN, was born in the year 1791. He commenced his studies at an early age in the University of Paris, and soon attracted the notice of M. Fontane, then at its head, by his superior capacity, and the merits of his college-exercises. He was, in consequence, when only in his nineteenth year, appointed to the Professorship of the Belles Letters in the Normal School; and two years after—in 1812—acquired high distinction by a Latin oration, pronounced according to annual custom, before the whole University.

From that period dates the commencement of his eminent literary career. The first of his performances that came before the public, was his “*Elôge on Montaigne*,” which gained the prize awarded by the class of “*Language and Literature*,” his competitors being some of the most considerable names then on the roll of the University. In 1814 he was appointed “*Supplementary Professor of History*,” and his opening discourse in that department tended greatly to enhance his reputation. In this essay he gave an elaborate portraiture of the state of Europe during the fourteenth century, the subsequent revival of literature and civilization, the encroachments of regal prerogative by which it was accom-

panied, and the rapid growth, notwithstanding, of industry, commerce, and arts.

In the same year, M. Villemain acquired further distinction by carrying a similar university prize, for an Essay—"On the advantages and inconveniences of Criticism." His preceding efforts had given much promise of literary eminence, and the present was regarded as its full realization. The production in question rendered essential service to the cause of good taste and correct criticism, and tended greatly to lower the pretensions of those who, while literature had fallen to a low ebb, had assumed, with very insufficient qualifications, to be the directors of the public mind. On this occasion, it being the eventful period of the meeting of the Allied Sovereigns in Paris, the youthful author was awarded the prize for his performance in the presence of those distinguished personages; and, contrary to the custom of the University, was allowed *himself* to read his essay from the rostrum. This he did with great effect, prefacing its recital with an eloquent exordium, adapted to the remarkable occasion of the assembly.

His next production was, an "Éloge on Montesquieu," containing a luminous analysis and commentary upon his great work, the "Spirit of the Laws;" which also obtained the Prize of Eloquence of the French University in its sitting of August 1826. Shortly after this, M. Villemain passed from the chair of Modern History to that of "Eloquence," where his reputation was progressively augmented by the stores of learning, both ancient and modern, which he brought to bear upon the studies and duties of his important office. From this period his history belongs less to the annals of the University than to those of the literature and politics of France.

His next important publication was a "History of Oliver Cromwell," in two volumes. This production has been, as was to be expected, the subject of much criticism, according as the political views of the reader varied; but all agree that it bears the stamp of originality and genius. It was simul-

taneously translated into German and Italian. He was at this time—August 1821—elected a member of the “Académie Française” in the place of M. Fontane, deceased; whose funeral oration and eulogism (a custom peculiar to France) he pronounced.

In the same year he published a translation of the newly-found manuscript of Cicero “De Republicâ,” accompanied by a series of notes, showing much learning and research, illustrative of the ancient Roman policy and habits. This was followed, in 1823, by a work of still more general interest, entitled “Discours et Mélanges littéraires;” and that, a few years after, by another, viz. “Nouveaux Mélanges historiques, et littéraires.” These volumes contain, among many other papers, such as that on “Funeral Orations,” “Discourses before the University, &c.” a Series of critical notices of the most eminent writers of France and other countries—Fenelon, Milton, l’Hopital, Shakspeare, Pope, &c.; and among these is the eloquent composition now presented to the public, his Essay on the genius and writings of PASCAL. In these volumes, also, a prominent place is occupied by a course of essays on the “Decline of Polytheism,” “Effects of the stoical philosophy of the Antonines,” and the “Progress of Christianity and of Christian eloquence;” all of which exhibit an extent of erudition and a depth of thought, which combine to place their author in the very highest rank of modern writers. The translations also interspersed throughout these works, especially those from the Fathers, are distinguished by purity and elegance; and his portraits of St. Jerome and Augustin are drawn with the force and eloquence of an accomplished biographer, and—which enhances their interest—the enthusiastic warmth of one who knew how to appreciate the excellences of those holy men.

M. Villemain’s political and official course remains to be briefly noticed. His earliest appointment, in 1816, was one especially suited to his literary talents—that of Director of the Press and Superintendent of the State Library, a duty

which is placed in France under the department of the Minister of the Interior. This office he, however, in 1820 relinquished, on the retirement of M. de Cazes; but still retained that of Master of Requests to the Council of State, which had been conferred upon him simultaneously with the former. In 1825, he commenced an ardent advocacy of the cause of the Greeks against their Turkish oppressors, on which occasion he published, with a view to impress the public mind on their behalf, his "*Lascaris*," together with a *Resumé* of the history of modern Greece. The active part that he took after this, in defence of the liberty of the press, contrary to the views of the existing administration, lost him the favour of government; and in 1829 he was deprived of his last remaining office, that of Master of Requests to the Council: on the other hand, the line of conduct he thus adopted raised him in public favour, and marks of popularity and distinction were lavished upon him.

A change of administration, however, taking place shortly after this, the course of affairs became more favourable to enlightened liberty, and the appreciation of literature. At that period M. Villemain formed an intimate union with the present distinguished Minister of France, M. Guizot; and they combined their efforts with much effect for the promotion of these objects. A fresh course of lectures on a variety of interesting subjects, was entered upon by Villemain, which were afterwards revised and published. Among these appear—which will invest them with especial interest to the English reader—his striking essays on the genius of Richardson (treating more particularly of his "*Clarissa*,") and those upon the writings of Gibbon, Robertson, &c.

A short time previous to the Revolution of 1830, he had been elected to a seat in the Chamber of Representatives, as deputy for St. Eure. At that important epoch he again acquired distinction by maintaining in the Chamber the law for the independence of the Judges; and his efforts were considered to be mainly instrumental in carrying that measure. Being

shortly after this appointed to the office of Vice-President of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, and a re-election being required, on his taking office, to his seat in the Chamber—as is the case in our own country—he was unsuccessful in obtaining again the suffrages of his constituents. The government, however, too well appreciated his talents, and his effectiveness in debate, to be willing to dispense with his assistance in the legislature, and he was immediately elevated to the dignity of the peerage, by ordonnance dated fifth May 1832. In that new sphere of duty he continued, as he had done in the lower Chamber, to take a leading and influential part in public proceedings, and was especially distinguished by a quality—far less common in the French parliament than in ours—the force and brilliancy of his extemporaneous speeches.

On the 13th May 1839, M. Villemain was appointed to the important office of Minister of Public Instruction; but resigned the Department, in company with his colleagues in office, at the latter end of February in the ensuing year, in consequence of the rejection of the dotation to the Duke of Nemours.

In addition to the publications of M. Villemain already noticed are, a “Treatise on the Literature of the eighteenth century;” “Reflections on the French language,” forming the preface to the French Academy’s dictionary; a collection of Funeral Orations; a History of the English literature of Queen Anne’s reign; a variety of discourses, essays, memoirs, and reviews, too numerous to be here described; and, last, his edition of Pascal’s *Provincial Letters* (from which the present translation has been made,) with illustrative notes, and the Preliminary essay now brought before the English reader, and which originally formed the introduction to that work. A striking feature in the literary labours of this justly distinguished person is the interest evinced by him in the great writers of our country, and his efforts to diffuse

an acquaintance with, and a taste for those fine models in France.

In reviewing M. Villemain's career, thus hastily sketched, a remarkable similarity suggests itself between its leading features—and even the principal incidents of his life—and those of an eminent countryman of our own, Lord Brougham. In both, the predominant qualities are seen to be, an untiring energy of mind, and activity of intellect; both have exhibited a like ardent pursuit of literary and political distinction; the fortune of both has been to enjoy, in their respective countries, the two departments of the legislature for the display of their great powers of debate; and—as if to complete the parallel—both have temporarily attained to dignified, but short-lived official eminence. The literary achievements of the French minister have been perhaps the most diversified and matured; but that superiority is compensated, in the case of his English contemporary, by a legal acumen—if not depth—which the nature of M. Villemain's education and early habits could not have enabled him to acquire. It is not necessary to pursue the comparison with more minuteness; and it must be left to posterity to decide which of the two has best *improved*, for the benefit of their respective countries, the high gifts and qualifications with which both are endowed.

This short notice cannot be more appropriately concluded than with the elegant tribute paid to M. Villemain by a fellow-labourer in one branch of his studies—M. Faugère—the indefatigable and enthusiastic Editor of the latest and most accurate collection of Pascal's "Thoughts" and miscellaneous writings. To that work the then Minister had, in his official capacity in connexion with the public archives, rendered much valuable assistance, and his services are thus recorded by its grateful author: "Nous aimons à consigner ici l'expression de notre gratitude, ancienne et nouvelle, envers un illustre écrivain, dont l'amitié est pour nous un charme et un honneur. Au milieu des soins et de la fatigue des affaires,

il trouve place encore pour ces conversations pleines de bon sens et d'esprit, d'érudition et de grâce, ou nous avons puisé plus d'une fois des conseils et des encouragemens. Nous le remercions non seulement de l'empressement qu'il a montré, comme Ministre, à faire mettre à notre disposition les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Royal, et à nous autoriser à les publier ; mais surtout de l'intérêt amical qu'il n'a cessé de nous témoigner dans cette occasion."

ON PASCAL,

CONSIDERED AS A WRITER AND A MORALIST.

BY M. VILLEMAIN,

PEER OF FRANCE, LATE MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
ETC., ETC.

IN surveying the varieties of human knowledge, we perceive two great divisions, under which all the acquirements of the intellect arrange themselves. In the one, the mind is occupied upon matter; in the other, upon itself. The one comprehends the whole science of external objects, from the most ordinary piece of mechanism, to the great frame-work of the heavens; the other takes for its study the heart of man; and the instruments of its research are, Morality, Eloquence, and Poetry.

Can the same mind, it may be asked, acquire the mastery of both these great fields of knowledge? Or, is their separation as insurmountable as their diversity is manifest? When physical science was elementary and imperfect, it did not suffice to give active exercise to a powerful understanding; and, in that stage also, it was compelled to call in the aid of the imagination, in order to conceal its own ignorance and mistakes. Pythagoras, who conveyed to the Greeks the science of numbers, inculcated his system in harmonious verse; and the divine Plato rested his brilliant metaphysics on geometrical conclusions. But when Science had succeeded in gathering into her domain a large store of observations and facts, she

was compelled to retire within herself, and to maintain, henceforth, an independent existence. Thus, the advance of human knowledge produced a divorce between Science and Literature; and the enlargement of our understanding led to a separation in its pursuits; as an empire, growing too extensive, falls necessarily into independent provinces.

If we look at the individuals who have, at any time, endeavoured to challenge an exemption from this common law of human weakness and limitation, we find our observation the more confirmed. Where they have succeeded in achieving some exceptions, they have never brought them to bear upon the same points. Perfection in the one object, has ever been gained at the expence of another; and the same mind has alternately exhibited mediocrity and greatness. One man there was—just presented upon this our earthly scene, as if aspiring to claim for the human intellect, simultaneously, both these titles to glory—but, alas! the first efforts of genius exhausted the powers of nature; and time was denied him for the further development of his wondrous powers. Yet, what a majestic spectacle is presented, in the mere rudimental achievements of this man, thus arrested and cut off in the midst of his labours! What an imperishable monument is formed by these first shoots and early efforts of his genius!

It is proposed now to submit a few remarks upon those works of Pascal, which are unconnected with the mathematical sciences. Writing to one of the profoundest geometricians of his day, he says, "I call geometry the very best occupation in the world; but still it is only an occupation; and as I have often said, it is an excellent thing for the trial of mental strength, but not for its full exercise." Without entirely acquiescing in this strong—and perhaps eccentric anathema—it may be allowable to regard, as the loftiest efforts of the human mind alone, those master-pieces of acute reasoning and persuasive eloquence, which address themselves alike to every age, and hand down to posterity a transcript of immortal

genius. In the exact sciences, the discovery severs itself—so to speak—from the inventor; it is corrected, extended, perfected, by other hands; and becomes a mere chain in the order and succession of truths, which the patient labour of ages is destined to discover. But the writer—be he poet, historian, or moralist—who records in burning words his mighty thoughts, or ennobling sentiments, leaves his task complete, and remains, himself, immortal as his work.

In reflecting upon that precocity of instinct, which from his tenderest age directed the genius of Pascal towards geometrical studies, and led him unconsciously to invent the very elements of the sciences of which he was enamoured, it would be superfluous to inquire, whether that faculty which was thus the earliest developed, was in him the strongest and the most consonant to the quality of his mind. Every talent presupposes an innate mental predisposition; but a multitude of external circumstances and foreign impressions—a thousand unforeseen and incalculable changes—may determine the development of the mental powers in a certain order, without proving a predominance of one over the other. Pascal's father wished to engage his son exclusively in literary studies; but he himself was passionately addicted to mathematics; and his life was absorbed in the science. Denying his child that pursuit at the outset of his education, he held it out to him as the reward of application in the future: he announced geometry to be the fitting study for the man. Daily experience shows us—and in less important instances than the present—that children are prone to imitate, rather than to obey; they adopt our actions, and forget our advice: their curiosity, in short, is most active upon objects that are prohibited. Is it not then probable, that, in an intellect active and penetrating like Pascal's, the very eagerness to acquire a secret and forbidden science would, itself, tend to draw out the mathematical talent that existed within him? Once excited, the passion for the exact sciences—of all others the most powerful in minds over which it has once gained the

mastery—kindled the ardour of his genius, by its fascinating revelations, by the novelty of its experiments, and by the certainty of its demonstrations ; and ended, by consuming with excessive labours the larger portion of his brief and fugitive existence !

But, in what way, we ask, in the midst of these benumbing and withering studies, was formed the able, the impassioned orator—the master of language—the creator of our style ? Our great writers have all been produced, either by an impulse of early and absorbing inspiration, or by a long and persevering devotion to their one, undivided pursuit. Pascal, emerging from the profoundest mathematical studies, came at once before the world, the sublimest of writers. In those eloquent pages, which formed the occupation of a portion only of the years allotted to this extraordinary man, we perceive neither the commencement nor the progress of genius : the goal is reached at once ; the intermediate traces of the advancing footsteps are lost !

This singular phenomenon may, in part, be attributable to the very influence of those exact studies, to which Pascal had been addicted, at a period when high intellectual attainments of that nature—as yet comparatively immature and unmethodized—imposed upon the mind the effort of a continual creation. All was originality, in a study incomplete and progressive. A species of enthusiastic impulse, and a vivid excitement of imagination, accompanied all those early essays of science. It may, thence, be supposed how much more powerful and inspiring would be such contemplations, than those frivolous objects to which literature had been limited under the protection of Richelieu. Could the language and the genius of France be properly developed by writers, who thought of nothing beyond mere language ; and made the study of words, alone, an important science ? To produce true eloquence, the *thought* of man must be elevated. It was the liberty of the ancients that formed the oratory of the ancients. Poetical imitation reproduced the forgotten art in the verses

of Corneille; but the nature of our institutions left no place for it any where, except on the boards of the theatre.

When the contemplations of men are unoccupied with the great concerns of their country and of liberty; when deprived—so to say—of the very existence derived from the exigences of public interests; there will yet be left to real genius many pregnant sources of ennobling inspiration. There are the hidden emotions of the soul, and the elevated sympathies of nature; there are the inexhaustible delights of speculative truth. It was from sources such as these, that the sublimity of Pascal's eloquence was drawn. His purity of taste, his contempt for the tinsel ornaments of a specious rhetoric, sprung in him, from the greatness of the objects which filled his mind. Originality followed him from the mathematics to the belles-lettres. He invented his language, as he had discovered the principles of science, under the same unchangeable influence of justice and truth. Had he received from nature a less fervent imagination, it might have been, perhaps, for ever extinguished amidst the frosts of abstract studies. But a mind such as his, far from succumbing under the influence of such pursuits, was rather raised by them the more forcibly to that closeness of deduction and that vigour of reasoning, which became the irresistible arms of his dialectics.

And who shall say further, how much Pascal owed of encouragement and animation to his communion with those illustrious solitaires,* whom it was his high vocation at once to defend and to surpass? I well know, how easy it is to refuse admiration to virtues no longer in fashion—to disparage talents which have left but a name. In these days, the highest praise of the Port Royal is, that it was the school of Racine. The laborious productions of Nicole,† of Hermant, of Sacy,‡ are read no more. The glory of Arnauld§ is a problem: his controversies provoke a smile. Yet there was a time, when the highest intelligence of a polished age studied with

* The Members of the Port Royal.

† Appendix, No. 4.

† Appendix, No. 3.

§ Appendix, No. 2.

admiration these writers, now so despised ; and Louis XIV. found himself obliged to arm his policy and his power against the unyielding firmness of a few humble theologians. The Port Royal possessed then, a reality of greatness, attested both by the relentless persecutions they sustained, and by the enthusiasm with which their wrongs were endured.

At the commencement of an epoch in which religion was destined to shine forth in all the splendour of art and genius, a body of men, austere in manners, free and elevated in mind, and united to each other, for the most part by the ties of blood or friendship, agreed to retire from the world, and form a society devoted to study and meditation. Enthusiastic lovers of antiquity, their writings bear all the impress of its manliness and strength. Excelling more in force of reasoning than in elegance of diction, they yet exhibit the finest models of purity of taste, and sound literature. They were not unacquainted with life and worldly affairs. Their refuge had been sought by men, tossed by the winds of faction, and wearied with party-strife. Those pious recluses were the innocent, but faithful friends, of the ambitious coadjutor of Paris.* Port Royal received into its bosom more than one noble wreck of the desolating tempests of the Fronde ;† and the victims of that effort for political independence, at once violent and abortive—which agitated the State, without reforming her abuses—sought here at last, an asylum, in the practices and the consolations of religion. *There*, were united, like one of the tribes of old, almost all the members of the family of the Arnaulds, so distinguished by the variety of their talents, and their elevation of character. If the difference of times permitted the parallel, they might be styled the Appii of Rome, so ardent, so able and resolute were they in character and disposition. Like them, the Arnaulds had to endure one of those continuous persecutions, which, in ancient republics, were often the heritage of successive families. Anthony Ar-

* Cardinal de Retz.

† The civil contentions of that period, so called.

nauld, himself an undaunted antagonist of the Jesuits in a celebrated process of past days, had drawn upon his children the hatred of that vindictive and powerful body; ...but he transmitted to them, with the disastrous legacy, also the courage and the talent that enabled them to brave its relentless fury.

But, it may be said, in what way are we now concerned in the five abstruse Propositions of Jansenius; and the long and sterile controversies to which they gave birth? Such flippancy of retort savours of a shallow philosophy. Circumstances and forms are perpetually fluctuating; the occupations of the mind vary; but, in all periods, and under differing names, there is ever waging a conflict between arbitrary authority, and the independence of the thought; between those who would impose absolute submission upon the domain of the mind, and those who challenge, as a natural right, the free exercise of the reason. It is the dispute between Socrates and Anytas, between the Stoic Philosophers and the Emperors, between Henry IV. and the League, between the Dutch and Philip II. Be it speculative, religious, political, literary; modified—as it may be—transformed, aggravated, or relaxed, by a hundred fortuitous circumstances, by numberless accidents of civilization or manners; this controversy still subsists. It partakes of the very dignity of our nature, of that noble prerogative which constitutes the thought of man the foremost and most precious good that his fellow-men can invade—the dearest that he can be called upon to defend.

In the part they took in this perpetual debate, the recluses of the Port Royal, while to appearance discussing only scholastic subtleties, represented the liberty of the conscience, the spirit of free investigation, and the cause of justice and truth. Their adversaries, in opposing them, supported a blind domination over the human spirit and soul. Pascal resented the yoke which these doctrines aimed to impose upon the reason of man. His lofty genius spurned submission to such insolent usurpation of the noblest of our faculties, seeking vainly

a refuge in the sanctuary of conscience and faith. He saw those exemplary men (bound himself to them by the ties of an endearing friendship) absorbed in the profoundest researches into the first sources and early monuments of religion; he marked with admiring sympathy, their isolation, their patience, their humility, their fear of mingling ambition with the ecclesiastical function; and their meek preference, rather, of the persecutions that had vexed the early ages of Christianity. The Society of the Jesuits, on the other hand, was at that time, high in favor, and intoxicated with power; the exclusive fountain of favour and disgrace; and bent upon pursuing with slander and persecution a body of men, too wise, too devout, too blameless, to be tolerated by them; and whose only crime was their determination to maintain inviolate their opinions, and to preserve their integrity of conscience. Could the pure and noble spirit of Pascal look on with indifference, while such a conflict was gathering around him?

On his first introduction to the Port Royal, his mind was filled with the philosophy of Epictetus, and the laxities of Montaigne. The frankness of the virtuous Sacy, the vast erudition and indefatigable spirit of Arnauld; the polished reasoning, the grace and sweetness of Nicole, (who presided as the Melancthon of this orthodox and tempered reformation) the natural eloquence and flowing imagination of Le Maitre*—all conspired vehemently to agitate a spirit, whose every power was already enlisted on the side of truth. In his pregnant conversations with minds which he found worthy of his confidence, Pascal exhibited—whatever the subject—the superiority of his own intellect; and those men, whose memories laboured under the stores of immense reading, were wont to recal, as their most precious treasures, thoughts extemporaneously thrown out by Pascal; as if he was destined to

* Le Maitre and the Sacy referred to above, were brothers; the latter taking his surname by way of distinction, from an inversion of his Christian name, Isaac. (See Appendix.)

exhibit, on every subject, that species of inspiration with which his mathematical studies had been pursued. Theology, in its deepest forms, was the especial pursuit of the recluses ; but every thing interesting to the human mind—philosophy, history, antiquities—formed the exhaustless subjects of their discourse. Arnauld was a profound geometrician ; and that logical clearness and vigour, that inflexibility of deduction, which had captivated Pascal in the mathematics, seemed to be the uniform attribute of the language, the books, the doctrines, and perhaps, the mistakes of the Port Royal. What ties must have been formed by this universal community of feeling, between minds of so high an order, thus brought together by a common love of meditation and study ! What faithfulness of attachment—not of party, but of principle and virtue—was cemented by this elevating communion ! It may, thence, be easily conceived, that the theological studies of his friends became the favorite ones of Pascal ; and that the exhaustless brilliancy of his genius, without any injury to its strength, contributed to clothe with the charms of nature and elegance those weighty demonstrations, with which the riper experience of his companions supplies him.

It was thus—in the necessity which soon arose, of making an appeal from the Sorbonne to the public, and of explaining those subtle questions respecting the doctrines of Grace, which served as the pretext for the persecution of Arnauld, the most illustrious member of the Port Royal—that the “ Provincial Letters ” had their origin. These papers were first brought out under a feigned name, and came upon the public by surprise. They took up the cause of a distinguished and persecuted man ; they attacked a flagrant abuse of ecclesiastical power, at a period when religion was a predominant object of attention : if their tone at first was light, their character was not ephemeral ; they touched the most vital interests of the day. Their brevity, their lucid arrangement, the unwonted eloquence of diction, the air of keen but graceful pleasantry that pervaded them ; the originality and force of phrases and senti-

ments that became the current-coin of discourse, and rooted themselves in the memory—all conspired to win for these productions success and popularity. Pascal states the question at issue with such transparency, that our assent to his conclusions is irresistibly secured. I should admire the *Provincial Letters* less, had they not been written before Moliere. Pascal anticipates the era of genuine comedy. He introduces various actors upon his stage. First, there is a listener, who receives indifferently all the passionate or prejudiced revelations made in confidence to him. Then we have men, sincere to their party; men without trust-worthiness, yet more zealous in party-spirit than any others: the candid and conciliatory, everywhere repelled; hypocrites, every where courted. It is a perfect drama, with some deviation from ordinary costume.

But the scene becomes still more animated, when, the actors being reduced to two, it exhibits the unsuspecting interpreter of the Casuists, in communication with an ostensible disciple, who, partly by ingenious suggestions, partly by assumed docility, elicits and encourages the indiscreet zeal of the well-meaning but simple Father. Excited by so facile an auditor, the Jesuit develops with eager self-complacency, all the principles of his school; fancies his hearer's admiration to rise with their increasing extravagances; and, by his praises, gives probability to that which would otherwise appear incredible. The dialogues of these two confidential interlocutors are pursued to considerable length; but the form assumed is so happy in itself, is carried out with such variety, and produces so thorough an illusion, that it never wearies. Plato, in his contest with the subtleties of the Rhetoricians, furnishes the model of this ingenious satire. His "*Euthydème*," which boasts of teaching virtue by an abstract method, resembles the Jesuit Father explaining the "*Devotion made easy*." But it is unquestionable that, for richness of humour, Pascal's Casuists far surpass the Sophists of Plato.

It will be obvious, then, that the subject of the "*Provin-*

cials," is far from barren, or unsuited to 'display the genius of the author, as some of his admirers have gratuitously apprehended. Pascal possessed, not only a power to create, but to choose well, his materials. Of all the obliquities of the human mind, that is doubtless the most remarkable, the endeavour systematically to justify vices by a principle of virtue; to commit the worst actions on the plea of good motives; to violate all morality, under a simulation of respect for it; and, at length, by means of the most bare-faced subtilties, to discover in the laws of God himself, justification and merit in doing injury to man. Nothing, also, can be more felicitously touched than the contrast between the austerity of the men, and the laxity of their principles: these are the resources that lay before Pascal; and he has availed himself of them with unsparing effect. In attributing to his opponents a settled and premeditated intention to undermine morality, he has, doubtless, fallen into some exaggeration; but this gives to all his attacks a point and concentration, whence they derive increased efficiency and support. Can it, likewise, be affirmed, with Voltaire,* that the work proceeds on an entire fallacy, since no society has ever sought to establish its authority by the destruction of morals? Is the moral instinct then so fixed and unchanging, that it may never be warped or perverted by the weight of influence and authority? Where is the man that has never faltered in the path of duty, or felt a secret wish that he could deviate without censure or remorse? This experience of our own weakness may well explain the attractions of a flexible morality. Have we not known more than one writer, who has propagated his philosophy by means of his moral system, and owed the success of his theory to the profligacy of his principles?

It is not difficult to conceive—while we lament the evil—that, in an age of religious zeal, but of imperfect information, a Society which aspired to rule the conscience, and sought to extend its influence over countries, differing in manners, in

* Age of Louis XIV.

habits, and in national and domestic prejudices, should, under the influence of these ambitious motives, have been led to accommodate its moral rules to these various and opposing dispositions. We are tempted to doubt the writer's veracity, when, in these letters, we hear the strange recital of priests—the ministers of humility and peace—sanctifying the duel, and authorizing homicides. But the authors of these maxims were not Jesuits only. They were Spaniards, or Sicilians; they were men of every country where the rules of revenge were hereditarily consecrated; and devotion, which was wrought into the very habits and manners of the people, could obtain from them every sacrifice, short of those passions, which were indigenous and national like their religion itself.

It cannot, however, be doubted, that these unworthy Casuists, in their scheme to flatter the varying prejudices of the populace, had incalculably debased that richest quality of the Christian law, its sublime uniformity of moral principle—a rule wholly independent of places, times, or manners. It was, therefore, a righteous and salutary enterprize of Pascal, boldly to oppose himself to these lax condescensions, so derogatory to true religion; and to expose that fantastic code, which had introduced into the great truths of morals and conscience the subtleties of chicane, and the crafty forms of legal pettifogging. With what an easy brilliancy, what pitiless irony, what richness of humour—worthy of the classic times of comedy—has Pascal fulfilled this high vocation! The doctrines of “Probability,” and of “Regulation of Motive,” have acquired an immortality—equivocal as it is—through his ridicule. It is this art of pleasantry, which the ancients deemed essential to true eloquence; this terse and graceful humour, in which Socrates excelled; these sly and well-directed provocatives, which give so much point to the Cynicism of Rabelais; the innate and salient gaiety, that overflowed in Moliere, and which often gilds the pages of *Le Sage*; that perfection of wit, in short, which is the play and the enjoyment of superior intellects: all these

constitute the imperishable charms of the earlier "Provincials."

When we contemplate the Life of Pascal, so brief in duration, so-oppressed by suffering, and by the langour inseparable from profound study; when we read the collection of his detached "Thoughts," which seem like the troubled heavings of a mighty, but uneasy spirit; we find it, at first, difficult to conceive whence sprung that exuberance of gaiety, which the same mind has scattered over subjects so dry and scholastic. Does mirth, then, so nearly border upon sadness, in those lofty intelligences, which look down, as from an elevated and distant region, upon their chosen study—the nature of man? One might, indeed, entertain such a belief, in reading Pascal, Shakspeare, and Moliere. To explain the combination, it has been said that the habit of profound observation tends to inspire sadness. It is a feeling which most pervades the highest order of faculties; because those minds feel more acutely than others the limitation and weakness of human thought; they are saddened by a consciousness of their own powers, while they alternately smile or grieve over the follies of all! *

Pascal had issued his Six earlier Letters: Arnauld was defended, and avenged. His apologist had carried the war into the enemy's camp; and the rapid, humorous, familiar exposition of the eccentric principles of their doctors, on moral questions, had delighted the public, and covered with the

* If I have succeeded in correctly rendering the elegant language of the original in this passage, the solution of the mental phenomena referred to does not seem quite satisfactory. That an elevated mind should be impressed with melancholy by the follies of his fellow-men is evident; but it does not seem equally clear, why, in connection with this feeling, his sadness should be excited by the limitation of his *own* powers. A more obvious reason seems to be, that in men of great genius the perceptions both of the mournful and of the ludicrous in objects around them, are more acute than in others, and imagination heightens and enlarges those impressions. Many of the finest writers, besides those named in the text, have consequently excelled in ludicrous as well as pathetic or sublime composition;—among others, Cervantes, Cowper, Byron, &c.—(Transl.)

rankling wounds of ridicule that hitherto invulnerable body. It was then that the controversy took an ampler range; and Pascal once more showed the versatility of his powers. The Jesuits, though intent upon the prohibition and suppression of these dangerous writings, yet could not forbear making attempts to refute them; but with little skill, and weak logic, as if stunned and disconcerted by the surprise of so bold an attack. It must be acknowledged, likewise, that the Society did not then number in its ranks names so distinguished as those that have since illustrated its annals. Bourdaloue was unknown, and had not studied his powerful dialectics in Pascal's own pages. The Society's champions, feeble, inexperienced, abusive, and dull, served only to rouse the genius of their terrible adversary. It was in his replies to them that, still preserving the simple form of Letters, Pascal rose with easy wing to the loftiest flights of eloquence, of reasoning, and of burning indignation. Who has ever tired of that exquisite passage, * in which, after describing with matchless force the long and deadly contest between Violence and Truth—"two powers," he says, "whose forces have hitherto remained but too nearly balanced,"—predicts, notwithstanding, the inevitable triumph of Truth, "because she is eternal and omnipotent, as God himself!" Neither Demosthenes, Chrysostom, nor Bossuet, under the inspiration of applauding auditories, ever produced anything more sublime than these sentences, which form the close of a polemical letter.

This noble eloquence is the habitual tone of the later of the "Provincials." Every part in them is severe, vehement, impassioned. The very same questions, on which Pascal had at first amused himself and his reader with banter, and which he had illuminated with pleasantries, are now taken up afresh, and treated with such seriousness and warmth, as to make his opponents wish to recal the lighter style of discussion, which had at first called forth their complaints. Now it is, that he

* Letter 12th.

vexes and ulcerates the wounds he had previously inflicted upon their self-love. Those hateful doctrines of homicide, to which he had then seemed almost to show some indulgence by only exposing them to contempt, he now confronts with all the force of inexorable argument, as a crime against the State, and the Church; against Nature, and Religion. His vehemence kindles as he pursues another offence—too common in every period of division and strife—slander; that moral assassination, of which his adversaries had made the most copious use, while they devised for it an ingenious apology—two things, which correct, although they do not redeem each other. In this controversy Pascal seems sometimes to overpass the bounds prescribed by Christian charity. In repelling calumny, he lavishes invective. His generous spirit, stung by the injuries of his friends, is unable to restrain its reproaches. Strong in mental power, in well-grounded resentment, and in the mystery with which his name was still shrouded, he exclaims, in defiance of his foes—“You find yourselves struck by an invisible hand, which exposes your delinquencies to the whole world; and you endeavour, in vain, to wound me, in the person of those to whom you believe I belong. I fear you not, for myself, or for others! I am attached neither to communities nor to individuals. All your power, all your influence are directed against me in vain! From the world I have nothing to hope—nothing to fear—nothing to desire. Endued by a grace which is from above, I need nothing that the wealth or authority of man can supply. . . . Never could you have encountered one so screened from your assaults, and so fitted to combat your errors—one, independent—isolated—without party—without tie—without professional bias—without encumbering occupation;—one, also, well versed in your principles, and determined—as God shall enable him—to expose and denounce them, without suffering any earthly consideration to avert or mitigate his hostility!”*

* Letter 17.

Is it then surprising, that, in a position so elevated—the only one worthy of his powers—Pascal should have been transported to emulate the impassioned declamation of the ancient tribunal? Subjects and circumstances change, but eloquence is ever the same.

And was his inspiration some mighty interest of patriotism or glory? No; his cause was the defence of a few obscure devotees, whom malice had assailed in their cloistered seclusion with a false charge of heresy. What matters then the dignity or the lowliness of his subject? Listen again to the fervor of the oratory, and the kindliness of the heart!

“Cruel and dastardly persecutors! Could the hallowed privacy of the cloister furnish no shelter from your calumnies? Whilst these holy women were, in punctual obedience to the rules of their Institution, adoring, night and day, their Redeemer in his Sacrament,—it was your magnanimous effort, by day and by night, to proclaim to the world, that they believed Him not to be present in his own appointed office, or even in his ascended glory at the right hand of the Father; and, at the very time that they were pouring out their secret prayers for yourselves, and for the universal Church, your unremitting aim was to thrust them out from her maternal bosom! You calumniate those who have no ears to listen—no mouth to reply!” *

If Pascal has, in these writings, succeeded in combining all the elements of the most energetic and ardent eloquence, there are portions of his “Thoughts,” which show that his eminence had been acquired by patient meditation upon all the resources of the art, and rested on a theory of a most profound nature, formed entirely for himself.† Nothing can be more useless than rules and axioms of taste, as laid down by men without genius. But when a great writer unfolds his ideas upon the science of language, he necessarily evolves them from the character and habits of his own mind; he throws himself, as it were, into his instructions; and such a revela-

* Letter 16.

† Appendix, No. 9.

tion is more improving than any system of principles and rules. Pascal—himself a profound geometrician—had conceived, by his superiority of intelligence, the use, as well as the limits, of scientific principles, as applied to the arts. What he has written on the spirit of geometry and of the imagination, is a complete refutation of the literary paradoxes which Fontenelle, D'Alembert and Condillac put forth in the subsequent century. His mind, free from prejudice, because it embraced every subject, assigns the several characteristics of the positive sciences and of letters, without evincing any fear of impairing his own pretensions, in determining the limits of each individual faculty; and, as if confident of retaining his due place in every distribution of the human powers.

Pascal, indeed, possessed in the very highest degree, the mastery over the two extreme provinces of thought,—reasoning and imagination. His life, his character and his writings, all gave proof of this combination; and it was especially marked in the greatest of the works which he ever contemplated. None had, perhaps, in the period in which he lived, embraced, with more ardour and sincerity, the great truths of Christianity; but his reasoning habits, mingling inseparably even with his enthusiasm, disturbed his mind with doubt. Can any other solution be given of that far-sightedness, which discovers to him so many objections, little thought of at that period, and leads him to fortify and defend positions which none had then assailed? The illustrious contemporaries of Pascal, whose convictions were not less sincere although more tranquil than his, were content to develop the tendencies of a creed, whose principles were then little controverted: they occupied themselves in rearing the temple, without fear that any would attempt to undermine its foundations, or shake its pillars. Pascal alone, conscious from innate experience of dangers unfelt by others, meditated a production,* in which all the sceptical doubts that his own restless genius had explored and fathomed,

* Memoir, p. 58.

should be effectually encountered and overthrown. The hand of the architect is yet visible; but where is he, who shall attempt to carry into execution his vast conceptions; to mould and inform, with flagging and unequal spirit, the copious but rude materials, which the master-builder has thus abortively collected?

Amid the sands of Egypt have been discovered stately porticoes once leading to palaces, which the lapse of ages has destroyed; mighty ruins, the vestiges only of gigantic cities; capitals, covered with fair designs, whose brilliant hues retain all their early freshness, and aspire to a fragile immortality in the midst of age and desolation: such may be deemed some of those "Thoughts" of Pascal—the mutilated rudiment and wreck of this his stupendous undertaking!

It was commenced, as is well known, when its author was already under the attacks of that afflicting disease, which was destined soon to cut short his immature existence. Meditation being with him the great end and business of life, he could not be prevailed upon wholly to abandon his task, till death deprived him of the power to think. Such, however, was the violence of his sufferings, that some other occupation than the resolution of moral truths became necessary to him. More than once, say his biographers, he resumed, with ardour, the most abstruse mathematical studies, and sought an entire absorption in those contemplations, for the relief of his physical suffering. Yet, might it not have been as a remedy for other griefs than these, that he availed himself of this resource? Did he not perhaps seek in such employments repose from the restless activity of a mind obnoxious to disturbing suggestions?

Hear him—the mighty intellect imprisoned in a sickly frame—exhausted by the intensest mental labours—his contemplations unceasingly fixed upon those great problems of man's destiny, which baffle all learning and all science—hear him thus exclaiming; "How know I who placed me in the world; or what is the world; or what I am myself? I am

fearfully. ignorant of all things. I know not what is my body—what my senses—what my soul; and that very part of me which thinks that which I am now uttering, and which reflects upon every thing, and upon itself also, is as ignorant of itself, as of every thing besides!”

It was this fearful ignorance, which he depicts with all the vividness of personal experience, that was the enemy of Pascal's peace; and that, from whose bondage—more oppressive than the most unreasoning faith—he was ever seeking deliverance.* Similar doubts had agitated the ancient philosophers; and, from time to time, had driven them almost to despair. This disquietude—ever incident, in a greater or less degree, to the highest order of minds—continually increased in strength during the successive developments of civilization, up to that period, when men, who had hitherto found a resting-place upon the ancient systems of belief, perceived them gradually giving way, and were equally incapable of dispensing with, or deriving support from them. Then it was, that, towards the latter ages of the empire, when Polytheism was falling prostrate on all sides, and the remaining disciples of Plato sought in vain to re-create a faith, and to establish a system of worship by efforts of reasoning—Porphyry,—the most eloquent of his school—is described as labouring under a melancholy, bordering upon loss of reason; and ready to embrace death itself as a refuge from the torments of doubt.† Thus also, in the case of many of the speculative Germans, of more recent times, exhausted by groping amidst the accumulated rubbish of sceptical ages, their minds seem to have succumbed under the too habitual exploration of the great mysteries of human existence. The barrenness of doubt seems to impel these too inquisitive spirits into the labyrinth of mysticism; as if some species of belief—of whatever nature—was necessary for the repose of their minds; as if the illusions of enthusiasm were to them the next best thing to the realities of truth.

* Memoir, p. 60.

† Platonius, in *Vitæ Porphyrii*.

Pascal, whose intellectual acuteness had, in anticipation, traversed the whole circle of doubt and scepticism, which after ages of civilization were to complete; warned by the conflicts in which his own spirit had been engaged, sought with eagerness a refuge in the asylum of the Christian faith. That alone was capable of unfolding to him the mystery of man's origin, and his mingled greatness and misery. Yet what were his efforts and disquietude ere he attained to this repose! "Contemplating," he says, "this silent universe; and man, powerless, dark, without guidance, cast upon a mere point in its surface; unknowing who has placed him there, what is the purpose of his existence, what his destiny on its termination; I shrink in terror from myself, like one that has been cast sleeping upon a desert land, and wakes unconscious where he is. I see around me others, possessing natures like my own. I ask them, if they are better informed than myself: they answer, no; and, straightway—unhappy wanderers! they look around them, find certain objects which they think can give them pleasure, attach themselves to those objects—become absorbed in them. But I—I cannot rest in such things; nor can I find satisfaction in the society of beings like myself—like me feeble,—like me miserable!"

Do we not see in these expressions a portraiture of the labour and conflict which his mighty spirit sustained in its laborious search after truth? Can we now be surprised at that depth of sadness—that eloquence of melancholy—with which his reflections—hasty, and fugitive, and abrupt—were habitually invested? What are all the interests of this world, what all its passions, in comparison with the researches of an immortal being into its own destinies? In a mind from whose perceptions nothing is hid, the combat with unbelief is the greatest effort of humanity. Pascal himself seems sometimes to sink under it: he is found taking extravagant precautions against the danger. At one time we see him with astonishment, staking, as it were, upon a chance the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul; and determining his

convictions by a calculation of probabilities. We are thus reminded of Rousseau (but with greater weakness and extravagance) making his hope of eternal safety depend upon the throwing of a stone! *

It is this which compels us to recognize the impotence, and, as it may be called, the despair into which the human mind lapses, in its fruitless efforts to penetrate that which is incomprehensible. This was the burthen sustained by Pascal—a burthen, the greater in proportion to the exaltation of his genius. A system of belief—positive and definite—could alone relieve and sustain his spirit. Its dogmatic authority allayed the restlessness of his own enquiries, and gave him the security he sought. When we read that Pascal carried under his garments a symbol formed of mystical characters—a kind of amulet†—it is evident that his powerful intellect had sunk to superstitious practices, as a refuge from the misery of uncertainty. This constituted his terror. The precipice, which, after the occurrence of an alarming accident, seemed continually opening under him, was but a faint image of that abyss of doubt from which his conscientious spirit ever recoiled.

Thus passed away the too brief existence of this great man. In its earlier stage, his aim was to emancipate human reason: he proclaimed the independence of thought, and the authority of conscience. Afterwards, he exhausted himself in labours to erect dikes and barriers against the desolating floods of scepticism. His powerful and fearless spirit embraces as its best safeguard, and from the depths of conviction, the doctrines of Christianity, and by that submission stamps upon their authenticity the largest measure of probability that they can derive from human testimony. But if his conviction is entire, the demonstration is imperfect; the proofs are somewhat wanting in harmony; the reasoning fails in consecutiveness: and there may be perceived in them still some in-

* Memoir, page 61.

† Ibid.

dications of the conflict to which he had been himself exposed. They remain proof, rather, of the vastness of his powers, than trophies of complete victory. Be they what they may, however, these mighty fragments are there, to inspire a salutary diffidence, while they excite the astonishment of frivolous Pyrrhonism, and to supply lasting food for the meditations of the learned and the wise.

It has been said that Pascal does not succeed in touching the heart; that his religion has the air rather of imposing a yoke than supplying consolation. Vincent St. Paul and Fenelon would, doubtless, have made more converts than he. We do not find in him all that tenderness of spirit, that sympathy with humanity, which breathes throughout the Gospel, and binds the heart in willing sway to the new dispensation. The interest he excites is ever profound. Free from rhetorical artifice, invested with all the reality of truth, his severities upon man's nature have in them nothing of invective: they are the extorted pangs of painful meditation upon self. We are impressed with a mournful reverence at witnessing the inward sorrows of so mighty an intelligence. His misanthropy seems the expiation of pre-eminence in genius: in him, the transcendency of mental power is the source of humility rather than of boast. His is no antique stoicism—no passionless contemplation of the miseries of his race. He bears them all on his own bosom. "Yet," says he, "notwithstanding all the sufferings we see around us, and which press us to the very ground, we feel within us an irrepressible instinct, that supports us under them!" It is this ethereal principle, as opposed to our feeble mortality, this contrast of grandeur and nothingness, that fills and informs the sublime chapters of Pascal upon the nature of man. It inspires him with emotions of matchless eloquence, and thoughts of startling depth. We are astonished at seeing the profoundest of metaphysicians condescending to the most minute observations, laying bare the closest secrets of the heart, and penetrating the whole nature of man with keen and mournful scrutiny.

Pascal does not, like La Bruyere, exhibit descriptions and portraitures; but he is accustomed to seize and delineate some leading principle of human action. He gives the history of the species, not of an individual. Estimating every thing terrestrial with philosophic freedom and disinterestedness, he often arrives—but by an entirely different path—at conclusions identical with the boldest innovations: but he does not pause there; he goes far beyond them. Sometimes, he seems as if about to shake the very foundations of society, of order, and of justice; but he soon rallies around them again by some yet deeper suggestion. He possesses the sublime of sense, as well as of genius. Thus his style exhibits, also, two distinct characteristics. In every part is found a union of boldness and of simplicity, of elevation and of easy grace, of enthusiasm and of familiarity. A celebrated writer has remarked that he is perhaps the only author of original genius, against whom the fastidiousness of taste has found nothing to object: as we read, we are conscious of a charm; but so refined are the graces, that we can scarcely trace the sources of our gratification.

MEMOIR.

. "Dead ere his prime!
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer!"—MILTON.

THE leading incidents in the brief but eventful life of Pascal have, from various sources,* been rendered familiar to the English reader. Its most prominent features may also be traced in the glowing pages that precede this—not drawn indeed, with biographical exactness, but sketched with the freedom and boldness of a master's hand. In reproducing, however, to the public, one of his greatest works, it may be presumed, that a brief summary of a biography, which can never be contemplated without sympathy, or remembered without benefit, will not be altogether inappropriate.

Blaise Pascal was born in Clermont, in the Province of Auvergne, on the 19th of June, 1623. His family was one of considerable distinction, his grandfather having held the office of a Treasurer of France, at Riom; and his father, Stephen Pascal, that of President of the Court of Aids, in Auvergne. His mother, of whom little is related, was Antoinette Begon: she, after giving birth to four children, died at an early age, when Blaise had only attained his third year.

* The Memoir of Madame Perier, his sister, written with much piety and simplicity, and published shortly after his death, has formed the chief material of most of the subsequent biographies. Condorcet's celebrated Eloge, gives, in its characteristic way, a luminous history of his scientific and literary labours. A memoir of much excellence appeared in a series of papers in the Christian Observer, in the year 1815.

Her other surviving children were Gilberte, Pascal's eldest sister and affectionate biographer, who was married to M. Perier, an Advocate of the French Courts; and Jacqueline, five years his junior, who, early in life, took the veil in the Convent of Port Royal in the Fields, and died in her thirty-fifth year.

The loss of his maternal parent at so tender an age was an irreparable one to the infant Pascal. Thrown by that event entirely upon the care of his father, who, though devoted to his children, was chiefly bent upon their mental proficiency—especially of one who he early saw would well repay his labour—his health and physical improvement seem to have been regarded as secondary objects; and the seeds of languor and disease were early implanted in his constitution. Besides this misfortune, the amenities of the domestic circle, if a mother's society had been spared to him, might, probably, have much tended to counteract the tendency to ascetic habits which showed itself in him with so much strength in after life.

The father, after Madame Pascal's death, formed the determination to devote himself to the care of his children's education, especially that of his beloved and only son. Contrary to usual experience, he found a residence in the metropolis afford him more freedom from interruption than a country life; besides that it yielded him more advantages in books and literary society: and, consequently, in 1631—Blaise being then in his eighth year—he relinquished the office he had held in Auvergne, in favor of a brother, and took up his abode in Paris. To this resolution, solely to conduct his child's education, he strictly adhered; and Pascal, therefore, presents the singular instance of achieving his mental greatness entirely without the aid of school or college. To his father, or still more to himself—for self-education ordinarily forms the largest share of the training of superior minds—he owed, under the guidance of the great Source of all Wisdom, who doubtless designed and directed him for his own service, the entire development of his eminent powers.

The elder Pascal's interest in his son's studies, was, as has been seen, early quickened by the discovery in him of an extraordinary measure of acuteness. He was himself a man of no inconsiderable attainments, and had in an especial manner devoted himself to mathematical pursuits. The method he followed in the instruction of his pupil, was characteristic of his own originality of mind, and evinced his high estimate of his child's aptitude. He aimed in every way to develop his mental powers, rather than to burden unduly his memory with matters beyond his ability. He fixed his attention upon things rather than words; and explained to him the principles of language, and the laws of grammar, long before he was taught any other tongue than his own. He did not allow him even to begin the Latin language till he had reached his twelfth year. He encouraged his enquiries into the phenomena of nature, and the most familiar objects around him, and continually led him to seek the reasons of whatever met his view, nor to rest till he had made some approach to the discovery of truth in his investigations. All these stimulating methods—however questionable their expediency might be in ordinary cases—served as a kind of hot-bed to the growth of a mind so adapted to the process as his son's: yet his was one of those few instances in which there seemed no diminution of strength from the rapidity with which his intellectual powers were matured.

The circumstances which led to the early development of Pascal's mathematical powers are well known; but cannot be passed over in any narrative, however summary, of his remarkable history.

In pursuance of the plan of education which the father had laid down, though himself passionately addicted to the mathematics, he determined to confine his son's studies to languages and general literature, till, according to his views, his mind should have acquired strength and capacity for pursuing the exact sciences with advantage. In this resolution, he withheld all books, and refrained, in his presence, from all con-

versation which might lead his boy's thoughts to those objects.

Notwithstanding these precautions, however, Pascal when about the age of twelve, showed a restless anxiety for information upon these interdicted subjects. He importuned his father repeatedly to be allowed to begin the study of geometry, but was constantly refused; while the indulgence of his wish was held out to him as a reward, at a future time, for diligence in his present pursuits. At last, when in answer to his enquiries, he had gained some very general ideas of the nature of the mathematics, as being the science of figures and substances, and their relative proportions, his mind began to work upon these imperfect hints. He shut himself up in a room in which he was allowed to play alone, and began a series of rude but ingenious experiments, covering the floor with figures drawn in charcoal, of squares, triangles, circles, and other forms which constitute the subjects of geometrical calculation. So strictly had the very rudiments of the science been kept from him, that he was unacquainted even with the technical names of these figures; but called a circle a "round," a line a "bar," &c.

Having drawn these figures, he proceeded, step by step, from definitions to axioms, and thence to demonstrations; and was deeply engaged in his calculations, when his father accidentally entered the room, and for some time watched unperceived his occupation. To continue the description in the artless words of his sister, "It was difficult to say which of the two experienced the most confusion—the son, to be thus surprized, after the interdict under which he had been laid, or the father, to see the various objects with which his child was surrounded. But his astonishment was increased when he found, in answer to his enquiries, that he was finding out the proportion of the angles formed by a triangle, one side of which is produced; which forms the subject of the 32nd Proposition of the 2nd book of Euclid. He questioned him again as to what had led him to that enquiry: this elicited further

explanations ; he recapitulated various of his demonstrations, and then went back ; still using his own rude nomenclature of 'rounds, bars,' &c., throughout the whole of his self-taught definitions and axioms ; until, as has been stated, he arrived at Euclid's 32nd Proposition."

His father was overwhelmed, even to tears, with the discovery. He hastened to communicate his feelings to an intimate friend, and fellow-mathematician ; and, acting on his advice, he at once removed all the barriers that had been interposed against his son's desired studies.

It is foreign to the purpose of this brief memoir to trace the progress of Pascal's mathematical researches, or of the various treatises in which they are recorded. The scientific reader will find an interesting enumeration of them in Condorcet's *Eloge*, although not unmixed with an obvious disposition to disparage the merits of his discoveries ; a disposition which he shared with Voltaire* and the other sceptical *Literati* of the last century, who could not forgive the piety of Pascal, even in consideration of his scientific and literary greatness. At about the age of sixteen he was admitted a member of a Society in Paris for the cultivation of mathematics, in which his father took an active part, together with most of the leading geometers of the day ; and at once found his opinions listened to with marked attention and deference. At about the same period also, he published his *Treatise on "Conic Sections,"* which was considered by his contemporaries as a master-piece of reasoning and science. On his father's

* Voltaire, in his difficulty in dealing with the religious writings of Pascal, while his vanity would not allow him to appear insensible to his eminent literary merits, had the indecency, in his last years, to publish a pretended edition of his "*Pensées*," in which, preserving just sufficient of the original work to keep up appearances, he made numberless interpolated alterations in the text, to suit his own views, together with additions of the most infidel character ; besides appending a series of notes which show an unmitigated hostility to truth, yet with obvious symptoms of declining powers. An edition of this work was published in London in 1785.

removal again to Rouen, where owing to some reverse in circumstances, he accepted another official appointment. Pascal, being then in his nineteenth year, invented his celebrated calculating machine, upon which he consumed two years of unintermitted labour. This, though much improved upon in subsequent periods by Leibnitz and others, and brought to still greater perfection in the present day by our own distinguished countryman Babbage, was at that time justly regarded as an astonishing effort of mental labour. The last-named undertaking was followed by his profound researches into the weight and elasticity of air, and their effects upon the equilibrium of fluids, in which he followed up the experiments of Torrecelli; and succeeded in establishing, in a great measure, the present philosophical theories upon these subjects, in opposition to the long-prevalent notion of "Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum;" although he himself, at the outset of his investigations, was a firm believer in that doctrine. The results of these enquiries were published by him in a series of Tracts upon "Vacuum," &c. &c. in 1647, at about the period that he attained his twenty-fourth year.

Little information is left by his biographers of the plan of miscellaneous reading pursued by Pascal up to this time. He still remained under his father's roof, whose pleasure and pride it was to continue to superintend his studies; and it was doubtless during this period that, in addition to his mathematical labours, he amassed, by intense application, the larger part of those stores of learning, both ancient, and what was then modern, which his writings exhibit. As early, however, as his eighteenth year, his failing health began to show the ill effects of excessive mental labour; the symptoms of complicated disease progressively increased with advancing age; and he was often heard to say, that from that time to the close of his earthly course, he had never experienced a day of entire exemption from suffering.

He had now, as has been seen, attained his twenty-fourth year; and then ensued the most important epoch of his

existence. Up to that period, although a mind such as he possessed could not have wholly shut out religious reflections, or have been entirely regardless of his eternal interests, yet it was evident that his attention had been chiefly absorbed by the pursuits of literature and science. He was happy in having been—mainly owing to the instructions and example of his father—preserved from all temptation to a sceptical opposition to revealed truth ; and, in an equal degree, had the convictions of conscience, and the beneficial influence of paternal restraint, withheld him from the irregularities and vices too incidental to his age and station. But at this time, partly from increased indisposition, which began to assume the form of paralytic affection, and partly in consequence of the perusal of some devotional works, the particulars of which are not related, his mind became deeply impressed with religious convictions. He, from that period, implicitly embraced the method of salvation revealed in the Gospel : he saw the insufficiency of worldly pleasures or honours to yield him happiness ; and determined, in the strength of God, to live only for his service, and for the purpose of promoting the welfare, spiritual and temporal, of his fellow-men.

It was then also that he reaped the fruit of another invaluable benefit which he had derived from his exemplary parent. The elder Pascal had habitually inculcated upon him the principle, that objects of faith should be regarded as wholly distinct from those of reason, and ought never to be subjected to her deductions. In this great truth he had implicitly acquiesced ; and it had the more weight with him, as his instructor was himself eminent in scientific attainments. In consequence of this important instruction it was, that Pascal ever exhibited the impressive spectacle of a mind intently inquisitive in every thing that relates to material objects, and testing all by the most rigid experiment ; yet submitting his capacious intellect, with child-like simplicity, to every dictate and discovery of revealed truth.

Every one will be here at once reminded of those illustrious

names with which our own annals are adorned—our Bacon, and Boyle, and Herschel, in whom this union of pure faith and profound science is so eminently displayed. ...

The ascendancy of Pascal's great powers showed itself more strikingly, now that he had thus devoted himself to the service of religion, than when he was a candidate for the honours of human learning and philosophy. He became the teacher and the guide of the circle in which he moved; and the members of his own family, in an especial manner, felt and acknowledged the value of his instructive example. To use the touching language of his sister and biographer, "his father was not ashamed to place himself under the teaching of his son; and devoted himself thenceforth to a more exact and holy life, up to the period of his decease, which was cheered by Christian consolation and faith; * and his sister, who, from an early age, had displayed extraordinary talents, was so impressed by her brother's conversation, that she resolved to renounce all her cherished advantages, and devote herself entirely to the service of God." She, in fact, as has been stated, afterwards carried out this resolution, in a way that *her* religious system led her to believe would be most acceptable to her heavenly Master, by taking the veil in the convent of Port Royal in the Fields; where she distinguished herself by the exemplary discharge of her conventual duties, and, after attaining to the office of Sub-Prioress, died there at the early age of thirty-five.

From this time Pascal seems to have, in a great measure, renounced all the studies to which he had been hitherto so devoted, and to have given himself up to those of theology and polemics, and most especially to the profound investigation of the Scriptures. In reading the latter, he was accustomed to avail himself of the works of the ablest commentators; and at length, by means of his extraordinary memory—so great, that he was said never to have forgotten any thing he had

* He died in the year 1651, when his son was in his 28th year.

read—he became so perfectly acquainted with the language of Holy Writ, that he was never at a loss respecting any passage that became the subject of discussion.

He then also entered upon that course of self-denial, and renunciation of the world, which characterized the remaining years of his life. The leading principles (as described by his sister) which he laid down for the government of his conduct, were, to forego pleasure, and to indulge in no superfluity. He gradually withdrew from much of the society which had hitherto cultivated his intercourse, and devoted a continually increasing proportion of his moderate independence to the purposes of charity. Many persons of high worth and attainments, and some of the most elevated rank, continued however to seek his conversation and counsels, and to them he was always accessible. Among the most distinguished of these was the youthful Duke de Rouannez,* who was a few years the junior of Pascal, and who seems to have been early fascinated by his talents, and won by his engaging deportment. He conceived for him the most devoted friendship, which continued unabated during his life, and was evinced long after death had dissolved their intercourse, by the most sedulous efforts for bringing before the public, in a proper form, the posthumous collection of his manuscripts. To this accomplished and virtuous young nobleman, Pascal addressed one of his most beautiful compositions, entitled “ Discourse on the condition of the Great.”

To these sacred studies, and holy course of conduct, he added the most fervent and unintermitted devotional exercises; and from this period to that which closed his earthly existence, he seems to have progressively improved in every Christian grace, till—as his sister again beautifully remarks—“ that reverence for religion, which had been the characteristic of his youth, was changed into an ardent and sensible love for all the great truths of the Christian faith, not less those which

* Appendix, No. 6.

influence the spirit, than those which direct the life and conduct in the world—the great end and object of all religion; and this holy fervor urged him ever to contend against every thing that was opposed to these great and vital truths.”

It is painful, however, to add to these affecting and impressive details, that (if we implicitly adopt the testimony of Madame Perier) Pascal superadded to this holy devotedness, so instructive to all who can appreciate Christian piety, in whatever church it is found,—much of personal austerity, which is, to say the least, unsanctioned by Scriptural authority. It was this which, among other evils, tended to withdraw him from much of that intercourse with society, which would have been not injurious to himself, and certainly beneficial to others. Although, in their nature, accordant with the spirit of the church, in whose bosom he had been nursed, and to which he still continued devoted, these rigours were carried, especially in his closing years, to such an extreme, as to form a fruitful subject for the sneers of the irreligious; while they have been very unduly relied upon as evidence of his merits by the more bigoted members of his church. Happily for the beneficial influence of this great and holy man's example, his faith, as every page of his writings testifies, rested on far surer foundations than those of uncommanded asceticisms; and it may be much questioned whether, if his voice could have been heard, he would have approved of the prominence with which such details have been put forth to the world.

But it should be always borne in mind that the Sister's Memoir, though evidencing much pious feeling, and an amiable devotedness to her brother's memory, appears to have been drawn up under some strong and peculiar influence, of the exact nature of which it is, at this distance of time, not easy to conjecture. But when we find her suppressing *all* reference to one of the most important incidents in Pascal's life, his alliance with the Port-Royalists, and his controversy with the Jesuits; and making only the most slight and passing allusion to the great work to which these occurrences gave

rise—and *that* (as is evident from the detail into which she enters respecting his philosophical studies,) from no inability to appreciate even the greatest of his mental efforts—from all this it cannot but be concluded that, in her biographical narrative, some singular constraint was laid upon her pen. And may not the same influence have led her to put forth, unconsciously to herself, with somewhat of excessive emphasis, the austerities of the writer, as a kind of set-off to the independence of judgment displayed by him in this formidable controversy, and which was so much at variance with the spirit, and so threatening to the interests, of their common church? The work itself, which made its appearance above nine years after Pascal's religious convictions were deeply imbibed, gives certainly no internal evidence of a conscience so morbidly scrupulous as the portraiture of his biographer represents. It indicates a mind and a judgment that knew well how to balance the claims of God, his neighbour, and himself. It combines the bearing and spirit of the man of the world, with the purity and devotedness of the Christian. And we may, at least, in the absence of a proper arrangement of *dates*, in which the Memoir is singularly deficient, believe that the more intense self-inflictions, to which he is represented as abandoning himself, must have occurred in the few closing years of his afflicted existence, when his sufferings, and his weariness of life, which served to deepen his personal piety and quicken his aspirations after a heavenly rest, might have somewhat impaired that exact discrimination of Scripture truth, which at an earlier period he had evinced, and led him to overlook the great principle that "bodily exercise profiteth little," and that "the kingdom of heaven consisteth not in meats and drink."

Pascal was now approaching the period that has been just referred to,—that of his controversy with the Jesuits. His father had been dead about four years. On that occasion he composed some impressive reflections upon the subject of death, and the prospects of the righteous after this life; and

addressed them in the form of a Letter to his sisters. Being now almost wholly deprived of domestic society, and having again removed his residence to Paris, these circumstances, together with congeniality in religious views, threw him into habits of close intimacy with the Members of the Port Royal, although he never (as has been popularly believed) joined their Society, or formally avowed himself a Jansenist. The circumstances which led to the publication of the "Provincial Letters" are narrated with such graphic effect by his eloquent commentator already referred to,* that any further details here would be out of place. A few remarks upon the spirit and tendency of this great performance, will be found in a subsequent part of this memoir. It is sufficient here to say that, although appearing at first under a feigned name, the unanimous voice of France soon attributed these noble papers to the only man then living capable of their production; and assigned him at once a place—which posterity has ever since fully ratified—among the most accomplished writers, in ancient or modern times.

But the successful achievements of polemical controversy, the inculcation of important doctrine, or the exposure and correction of a corrupt body of theologians—all this was not enough to satisfy his desires for the glory of his Divine Master, or for the benefit of his Church. Amidst the pressure of increasing infirmity, he contemplated (as is well known) a stupendous work, that should not only demonstrate, from every source, the truth of the Christian religion, but, by the most comprehensive reasoning and illustrations, enforce, from the nature and the wants of man, the necessity of a Divine Revelation for his guidance here, and for the satisfaction of his desires hereafter. So copious was his projected undertaking that he calculated, if the state of his health should enable him to give to it continuous attention, its completion would have occupied a period of several years. Upon this

* M. Villemain.—For some further anecdotes, see also Memoir of Arnauld, Appendix No. 2.

scheme he had long and deeply meditated, and had amassed in his mind large stores of materials, in an imperfect and disjointed state, before even he commenced the task of committing them to paper. But it was the inscrutable will of Providence that strength should be denied him to complete this great undertaking. The state of his health became such, that his medical advisers wholly interdicted the labour of writing or even study. His custom however was, during short intervals of suffering, to note down upon detached papers, the thoughts that occupied his mind, often in the rudest form, and wholly without method or connexion. These papers, collected after his death, and digested, as far as was practicable, with great labour, formed his well-known "*Pensées*," a work which has ever since been regarded as among the richest repositories of eloquent thought and profound theology.

While thus struggling under the conception of this great undertaking, and the physical inability duly to carry it into execution, a circumstance occurred, which has fortunately been preserved with more of detail than most of the incidents of his life. A number of his friends, and among them some of high worth and distinction, joined in a request to him to furnish them, orally, with a summary, or outline, of the leading topics of his projected work. In an interval of comparative strength, he summoned them together, for the purpose of complying with their desire; and then, it is related, in an uninterrupted discourse of from two to three hours duration, and carried on with exquisite method, clearness, and elegance, he unfolded to his hearers the plan of his contemplated treatise, together with an outline of the arguments and illustrations by which it was to be supported. An account, in an abridged form, has been preserved of this invaluable oration, of which want of space forbids the insertion here, but which is familiar to all who are acquainted with the works of Pascal in their original language.

Who would not pause for a moment to dwell upon this scene? It was one which a painter loves to delineate, and

which none but an eye-witness could have described. Imagination realizes, on the one side, the audience, comprising various classes and conditions—the young, the advanced in age, the layman, and (perhaps) the ecclesiastic, the noble in birth, the devoted relative, the admiring friend ;—their eager gaze, their fixed attention, their chastised silence. We then seem to view the speaker ; his youthful air ; his enfeebled frame, his pallid aspect, his earnest tones : we listen to his discourse—the lucid arrangement of topics, the graceful diction, the liquid flow of speech. All must have combined to impress and subdue the mind, while over all was thrown a feeling of deep sadness, in the foreboding that so noble a design was, too probably, to be left incomplete ; and that even the efforts of memory would be incapable of storing, and transmitting to posterity the mere outlines which he was imparting to them ! The classical reader will be reminded of the lectures of the ancient philosophers in their academic bowers ; or, still more strongly, of the dying discourse of Socrates with his friends. But *his* were themes far more momentous than any which those illustrious men could impart to the greedy ears of their disciples ; and, instead of the faint guesses which they were enabled to send into the shadowy abysses of futurity, the youthful teacher here was possessed of the light of unerring truth, to illuminate his own spirit, and to direct those of his rapt and admiring auditors !

It may be here remarked, that it is an injustice to Pascal to attribute the zeal he manifested for the resistance of scepticism, to a continued struggle in his own mind against the suggestions of unbelief. His comprehensive knowledge and ardent imagination presented before him, indeed, every kind of cavil, which existing or future forms of infidelity might allege against the truths of Revelation. But it was not surely to be thence concluded, that he himself attached weight and importance to such objections ; and it seems by far the most obvious solution of those fine passages, in which the struggles of man's doubt and ignorance are so glowingly depicted, to

regard them as rhetorical impersonations of a mind supposed to be destitute of those infallible guides to truth and happiness, which he himself possessed. In the same manner, it is to be regretted, that so high an authority as that of M. Villemain should (doubtless through inadvertence) have been given to the story of the Talisman, or Amulet, said to have been found, after his death, on the person of Pascal, or that he should have brought into an apparent juxta-position some abstruse and subtle calculations into which the mathematical habit of Pascal's mind impelled him, with the morbid and profane ravings of Rousseau. Nothing can be more evident, on inspection of the first-mentioned document itself,* than that it was a kind of hasty and fugitive memorandum, drawn up in a manner that was habitual with him, for the purpose of recording, for his own eye alone, a species of resolution or vow which he had formed in some moment of ardent communion with the Divine Being; and instances of these kind of solemn transactions are by no means uncommon with minds of devotional elevation such as Pascal's.†

The last four years of Pascal's life presented an almost unbroken series of bodily suffering. Incapable of mental exertion, his soul was absorbed in devout exercises; and, when his little remaining strength permitted, his delight was to pass from one church to another, to partake of the various religious solemnities, of which the metropolis afforded an uninterrupted succession. He seemed, at those times, almost to realize the fond aspiration of the Psalmist; and, like the bird, of whose privileges he was envious, to make his habitation in the courts of the Lord! It is touching and instructive to contemplate him in these scenes. Who does not follow with interest one, with whose name Europe was resounding, the victorious polemic, the scourge of error—on whose brow

* Appendix, No. 11.

† It is pleasing to see this view of the circumstance referred to, energetically supported by the latest French editor of Pascal's miscellaneous writings, M. Faugère.

literature and science had twined their blended wreath—whom the world, for his genius and his learning, was eager to court and caress;—to see him thus—his days numbered, the unerring premonitions of decay borne within him—pierced by the “Arrows of the Almighty,”—stealing, in sickness and solitude, like the stricken deer, from sanctuary to sanctuary; and finding his only remaining comfort in the services of that Church, which he had so earnestly sought to purify, but which he yet, perhaps, too fondly, too blindly loved! Was he, in that solitude and amidst those sufferings, really unhappy, and an object of our pity? He himself was, from his inmost heart, pitying the unthinking world, upon which he had turned his back. He possessed, in those moments, “a peace that passed all understanding,” “a joy, with which no stranger might intermeddle.” He bore within him “a hope full of immortality;” his was a “sober certainty of bliss.” In those services, alloyed by superstition and error, yet changed by the alchemy of his spiritualized mind into the sacred nutriment for which alone his soul hungered, he found the foretaste of those pure and stainless adorations, on which he was about eternally to enter; and, in the approaching extinction of his earthly hopes, he welcomed the commencement of an existence, which was alone commensurate with the large desires of his aspiring spirit!

Yet even at this period of suffering and decay, an occasion arose in which his genius blazed up once more in all its wonted splendour. His nights were rendered almost sleepless through unceasing pain; and, after a longer period than usual of insomnolency, he entered almost involuntarily upon a train of profound meditation upon the properties of the “Cycloid.” He was for a long time indisposed to make the problems that resulted from his investigations public; but at last, the intreaties of his friends prevailed, particularly those of his young and devoted admirer the Duke de Rouannez. He set to the work with the haste and impatience of one, who felt that the time could be ill spared, and was taken from other and

more congenial occupations. In a few days the treatise was prepared for the press; and the world of science was again astonished at the appearance—as before, under a fictitious name, but one of which the key was soon discovered—of a work which equalled, if it did not surpass, all the former efforts of his mathematical powers. It may not be uninteresting here to state, that the solution of the elaborate problems which he put forth on this occasion, were made the subject of competition among contemporary mathematicians for a considerable pecuniary prize, offered personally by Pascal. Among the competitors was our eminent architect Sir Christopher Wren; but the two who approached the nearest to success were Lalloure, a Frenchman and a Jesuit, and Wallis, another Englishman. Owing to some informality in the answers of both these persons, the umpires appointed for the adjudication of the prize, declined pronouncing in favour of either, and it was not bestowed at all. This circumstance is made the subject of sarcastic remark by Condorcet in his narrative—otherwise a learned and interesting one—of the transaction; insinuating, contrary to the well-known facts of the case, that the prize, although really earned, was withheld from the Frenchman because he was a Jesuit, and from Wallis as a heretic.

The same spirit of mortification and self-infliction which he is described as having so long evinced, characterized with increasing force the closing period of his life. Yet, if his austerities towards himself, were carried far beyond what we believe to be enjoined by the benignant spirit of the Christian dispensation, his heart overflowed with love and charity for his fellow men. While he was fond of exhorting his relatives against a display of undue attachment to himself, his affections were ever melting in tenderness towards them. He resembled an infant, in the humility and submission of his spirit. If ever drawn into a momentary impatience towards those by whom he was surrounded, he could not restrain his eagerness to atone for the hasty ebullition, by the tenderest expressions

and most gracious acts. Having never married, and his family connexions being all in competent circumstances, he seemed to feel himself justified in dispossessing himself of a large share of his moderate property for benevolent objects during his life; but, such were his eager sympathies towards the poor and suffering, that he was with difficulty restrained from the most disproportionate charities. Not satisfied with cultivating that first of Christian graces, "poverty in spirit," it was almost his passion to resemble also the poor in external condition. He was always accustomed to seek out for the supply of his domestic wants, not such tradesmen and artificers as excelled the most in their departments, but those who most needed custom and employment. And one of his latest acts was, when almost in an extremity of illness, and the child of his only domestic, who enjoyed a gratuitous domicile in his house, was seized with small-pox, to cause himself to be carried from his own dwelling rather than suffer the helpless infant to be exposed to danger by a removal.

His closing moments now approached. The most intense sufferings never drew from him a murmur of impatience. The scriptures, which had been his exhaustless study during his period of acuteness and vigour, were now, in his hours of weakness, the balm and consolation of his spirit. His especial delight was in an unceasing repetition of that treasury of spiritual comfort, the 119th Psalm, which forms the "*Petites heures*" of the Romish Church.* An ecclesiastic, a friend of his family, on paying him an occasional visit, returned from his chamber, exclaiming to his sorrowing relatives, "Be comforted! his God is inviting him to himself: great as I always thought him, never did he appear so great as now. Would that I were in his place!"

His medical attendants, with an incompetence that seemed common to the profession in France in that day, flattered him

* This portion of Scripture has always been a source of instruction and consolation to the devout. It is said that our own venerated Wilberforce could repeat the whole (176 *verses*) from memory.

and his friends that his symptoms were free from danger. But he himself knew the contrary. The soundness of judgment that distinguished him on every subject, extended to a clear insight into the character of his own diseases. In the conviction of his advancing end, his only solicitude was to partake of the last offices directed by his Church for those in dying circumstances. This was for some time opposed, on the ground that the excitement of the services would too much exhaust his strength. His sufferings however still increasing, his sister took upon herself to procure the attendance of an ecclesiastic in his chamber, during the last night of his existence; and on his being seized with a violent convulsive fit, an interval of mitigated distress was embraced to administer to him the sacrament and extreme unction. His last words were expressive of his habitual humility and faith: "Forsake me not, O my God!" he exclaimed; and, shortly after, calmly committed his spirit to his Redeemer. He died on the 19th of August in the year 1662, just two months after the completion of his thirty-ninth year.*

No account has been transmitted of the figure and personal appearance of Pascal; and the only authentic portraits that have been from time to time published of him are derived from one taken after his decease. I esteem myself fortunate in being able to prefix to the present volume the copy of a sketch, borrowed from a contemporary French Work already referred to,† the discovery of which was attended with interesting circumstances. Not many years since, on the death of the latest female descendant of M. Domat, an eminent advocate, and an attached friend of Pascal, a volume was found in a box of old papers, containing a legal treatise; and on the cover was a sketch in red chalk, by the hand of Domat himself, of Pascal's "striking and noble countenance," as it is justly designated by the writer, of whose narrative I am availing

* For his Epitaphs, see Appendix, No. 13.

† M. Faugère.

myself. Over the portrait is the signature of Domat's son, with this inscription, as copied in the frontispiece, "My Father made use of this colouring for the manuscript of his work on Civil Laws;" and at the bottom, "Portrait of M. Pascal by my Father." The drawing was made in the year 1648, when Pascal was in his twenty-fifth year, and when he and Domat were fellow-students in the classes of natural philosophy. The countenance does indeed justify the epithets here bestowed upon it. It is full of sensibility and intelligence, with an air of deep pensiveness, which was especially characteristic of the original.

Of his personal habits, colloquial powers, and other similar particulars, little is recorded. It is probable that although, as is usual with minds of a high order, he might be reserved in his intercourse with strangers, when that restraint was removed, the abundance of his resources would render his conversation eminently pleasing and instructive. Habitual silence is the resource only of the empty or the misanthropic. Of the attractiveness of his society one remarkable instance has been already referred to, in the devoted attachment of the youthful and accomplished Duke de Rouannez. And it is also clear, that to the number of his attainments he added one, which is rarely found in such a combination—much facility of extemporaneous discourse; a striking example of which has been related in the oral epitome which he delivered to his friends, of his work on Scripture Evidence.

A specimen of his hand-writing, derived from the same source as the portrait, will also be found in another part of the volume.* He wrote with great rapidity, using many abbreviations and arbitrary characters, as has been often the case with writers of ardent minds, whose ideas seem to flow too fast for the power of the hand to follow.† Yet the characters are described as having almost the strength and precision of engraving. Like all writers (or with a very few exceptions)

* The Emperor Napoleon's hand-writing was a striking instance of this kind.

† Appendix, No. 12.

who have aimed at the highest excellences of composition, his most finished passages were elaborated with excessive care and pains, and written and re-written numerous times before his fastidious taste could be satisfied.*

It has been generally supposed that he was little accessible to female attraction, and never, or very remotely, contemplated entering into the married state. An interesting hypothesis upon this subject has however been raised by his admiring commentator, M. Faugère; and, as he is a writer evidently not prone to take up opinions without careful investigation, carries with it much weight and probability. The Duke de Rouannez had a sister, who at the commencement of his intimacy with Pascal, was just entering womanhood, beautiful and accomplished. Her age was scarcely sixteen, and Pascal was in his twenty-eighth year. The interesting Charlotte de Rouannez seems to have at once imbibed the enthusiastic admiration of her brother for his friend, and he became her confidant, her instructor and correspondent. M. Faugère has brought forward a series of touching letters from Pascal to his fascinating friend and disciple, part of which were known before to exist in manuscript, and others which had been till now undiscovered; and these, although, through the severity of ideas of the Port Royal Brethren and others, in whose custody they had remained, they have been obviously denuded of all topics but those of a religious nature, bear evidence of no common measure of interest, on Pascal's part, in the well-being of his correspondent. M. Faugère attributes also—and probably with justice—to the influence of this young lady, the composition of his graceful essay on the passion of Love, which was for the first time published, some years since.†

* Among many other instances it is recorded of the present Lord Brougham, that he wrote out the peroration of one of his most important speeches on the trial of Queen Caroline a large number of times before he could bring it to his own standard of excellence. The effect of the production, on its delivery, is said to have been such as to reward the labour it had cost the speaker.

† Appendix, No. 7.

Combining these circumstances together, M. Faugère comes to the conclusion—and with much plausibility—that Pascal, from the instructor, became the suitor of his attractive pupil. Encouraged by the attachment of his brother, fascinated by her charms, and dazzled by her rank, he (perhaps rashly) aspired to an alliance with one, in whom esteem seemed already verging on love. The inequality of their station presented an insuperable obstacle; and either his advances were repulsed, or—which is more probable—he silently relinquished his hopes. It was at that period that may be supposed to date Pascal's return to the severer path of religious observance and desires, from which, as appears by the intimations of his biographers, he had, under some seductive influence been temporarily induced to stray; and then, as is eloquently observed, "his spirit, finding nothing in human affections sufficiently faithful and large to satisfy his aspirations, turned to the source of all excellence and all love, and sought the consummation of his hopes in Him who is alone perfect, eternal, and infinite!" This high-born and accomplished young female seems to have at one time contemplated the renunciation of all her prospects in favour of a conventual life. She passed a noviciate in the convent of Port Royal, but quitted it shortly after Pascal's death, and re-entered the world. Her subsequent history is not recorded.

The only branch of literature which Pascal seems not to have aspired to was poetry. Indeed there is a passage in one of his writings, which directs some disparaging expressions against versification, as an art; and if, as is probable, the poetry which he denounces was nothing more than that which the French language then presented, his derogatory terms need not be matter of surprise; for the most accomplished poets of France had not then appeared. It is little likely that he should have affected to undervalue the great master-pieces of the classic ages, into whose literature he had drunk so deeply; although his habit was, less than almost any other writer, to make direct reference to other authors. Shakspeare, it is

probable—as his works contain no allusion to English writers—he was unacquainted with; and the majestic harmonies of Milton were at that time little known or valued, even by our own countrymen. Voltaire has descended to the littleness of raking up a few unlucky verses, which he is charged with having once perpetrated, in a good-humoured complaisance to a lady of whose hospitality he had been partaking; and, certainly, if the production be Pascal's, it may be readily given up to the dignified sarcasm of his antiquated critic.

Pascal's mind, in fact, teemed with all the elements of poetry in its true sense—imagination, sublimity, pathos, enthusiasm—unbounded command of language, comprehensive thought, and large acquaintance with men and things. These gave him sway over the passions of his reader, which is the great attribute of poetry; and he may therefore well afford to dispense with the fame of rhythmical composition. In short, whether we regard his achievements in science, in literature, or theology; and, especially when we reflect upon the narrow space of time—the mere segment of ordinary existence—into which all were crowded, we may cordially respond to the enthusiastic language of his latest Editor, that “his genius was one that did honour, not to France only, but to the human race.” Yet was it his ardent piety, his deep devotedness to God, and the consecration of all his powers to His glory, and the welfare of man, that form the crown and consummation of his mental greatness. It is here that he takes the very highest rank among those, whose number is too few (but of whom our *own* happy annals include no small proportion,) in whom this holy and beneficial union has been witnessed. He seems to have been designed by the great Disposer of man's destinies, to show that His gifts are independent of all those circumstances to which we are apt to attach importance; and to have been placed in the midst of an erring and corrupt Church, as a rebuke to her for her misimprovement of his efforts for her correction; and as a warning to those who, enjoying the privilege of a purer

faith, do not, equally with him, improve their superior advantages.

It is thus that memory loves to linger over the imperfect records of learning, wisdom, and piety. But imagination has also her province; and the conjecture forces itself upon the mind, whether, if lengthened years had been granted to him, such a man as it has been thus attempted to describe, would have remained in communion with the Church of Rome?

The predominant qualities of Pascal's mind were, slowness in deliberation, and decision in act, when his determinations were formed. With these were united a deep reverence for prescriptive wisdom and legitimate authority, and an inexhaustible desire for the discovery of truth. Of the latter propensity, his whole life and studies were an illustration; and his devotion to the support of lawful rule was remarkably shown by his energetic efforts, under extreme bodily infirmity, in support of the authorities of Paris, during the civil disturbances that occurred towards the close of his life. Even exploded systems of opinion, if they bore the sanction of antiquity, lingered tenaciously in his mind; and, in one of his scientific treatises, he expresses almost reluctance to abandon the ancient doctrine of "Vacuum," when conviction had forced itself upon him of its fallacy, and his own experiments had chiefly contributed to its overthrow.

The active period of his life may be considered to have closed, as has been seen, on the attainment of about his thirty-fifth year; that period, when the mind ordinarily attains its fullest maturity, and after which it is wont to gather in its richest stores of experience, and to turn its acquisitions to the most valuable results. Pascal, with all his great powers, was not exempted from that law, to which a profound observer of human nature* has subjected a genius of even a higher order than his, when he says, "Nature gives to no man knowledge; all must

* Johnson—Preface to Shakspeare.

increase their ideas by gradual acquisitions ; must grow wiser as they grow older ; and instruct with more efficacy, as they themselves are more amply instructed."

His polemical vigour had been hitherto exclusively directed against the errors of the Jesuits. It was not with haste that he entered upon that great enterprize ; for his religious convictions had been imbibed as early as his twenty-fourth year, while the Provincial Letters were not commenced till he had reached the age of thirty-three. The interval had been doubtless employed in deep meditation upon the injurious tendency of the tenets of the Jesuit school ; and in collecting such stores of learning and illustration, as would be requisite for the great conflict in which he was preparing to engage. Yet, throughout this controversy, he seems to have laboured under the impression, that the Jesuit system was, with all its evils, but an excrescence upon the Romish Church ; which, when healed of its virulence, or entirely cut off, would leave the body itself in health and soundness. But who can doubt, that advancing years and more mature experience, would have shown him, that, where so foul a growth had supervened, the system itself must have been incurably diseased ; and the offspring which had attained to so portentous a stature, could not have materially differed in nature from the parent in whose bosom it had been nurtured ?

Even the principle of self-defence would have led to a prolongation and embittering of the warfare. The condemnatory Bulls which the Papacy issued against the Provincial Letters,* would, if life and strength had been given him, have led to rejoinders on his part ; and, to use his own language, " he would have been obliged to carry the war into the enemy's borders, and wage it at his own cost." Formidable, indeed, to them might that cost have been. One conquest would have led to another. His own resources would have consisted⁴ in the exhaustless stores of conviction and truth ; and the

* Appendix, No. 1.

whole opposing territory would at length, in this righteous war, have been invaded and possessed.

But the effect of advancing years would have been chiefly valuable in the enlarged field of observation they would have opened to his mind. Life, with all its affairs and interests, would have progressively spread out before him, and presented fruitful matter for his active contemplation. His own existence had been hitherto absorbed and divided between science, literature and theology. The world—other than that of France and *Jesuitism*—had been well nigh shut out from his view. There is no evidence that he had ever travelled in any other country than his own; or, indeed, migrated much beyond the route between Rouen and Paris. Germany and England seem to have been little known to him, and our language formed, at that time, probably no part of a polite or learned education. Thus must there have been large subjects of enquiry and reflection yet unexplored by his inquisitive mind. Protestantism was, comparatively, only dawning over Europe; and it is not easy to conceive what might have been the effect of his meditations, in the stillness of learned leisure, and under the teaching of that Divine Instructor, whose aid he ever so diligently invoked, upon the benefits, social, moral, and religious, which, under many drawbacks—amidst chills, and blights, and tempests—*her* glorious light was gradually diffusing throughout those countries, and especially our own, which had early welcomed her benignant influences.

But, above all, Pascal possessed, in a degree greater, perhaps, than any man whom the Romish Church in France ever produced, a knowledge of the guide to all truth—the Scriptures of Inspiration. They were written in his memory, and sealed upon his heart. By their illumination he would doubtless have been shown, in slow but sure progression, and in a manner accordant with the constitution of his own mind, the unscriptural doctrines and superstitious practices that had been engrafted upon his Church; and, truth having once impressed

itself upon his own mind, conscience would not have allowed him to withhold his convictions from others.

In this way he would have been led to see, in the Jesuit-code which he had combated, only an exaggeration and concentrated form of the subtle and pernicious policy of the church from which it sprung. His denunciation of its corruptions and perversions would have opened his eyes to other evils, such as indulgences, monasticism and the Inquisitorial tribunals, which had their origin before Jesuitism was known, and grew up independently of its influences. The iniquities which that system had introduced into the Confessional, would have discovered to him the vices inseparable from the Confessional itself. And the buffooneries of Mariolatry, which he had so keenly ridiculed, would have brought him to pause upon the scriptural evidence for ascribing any divine honours to the Virgin.

In the same manner, his bold rejection of Papal infallibility must have opened the way to the admission, that Councils (composed as they were merely of fallible men) might fall into error. His perception of the growing tyranny of the Papal hierarchy would have induced him to long for a church which should acknowledge no head but the national and constitutional Ruler. And, yet more, must his own love and veneration for the Scriptures have led him, ere long, to resent and resist that fruitful source of all error, the denial or restriction of its sacred pages from the great body of the Church.

But more than all, would his persevering and enlightened study of that unerring Directory have brought to his mind fresh revelations of its pure and salutary doctrines. His ardent advocacy of those which he had already embraced, especially that of the Divine Influences—the “effectual grace,” as by way of distinction it was then scholastically termed—could have scarcely failed in due time to prepare him for a discovery and recognition, with *Luther*, of that great Reformer’s cardinal tenet “Justification by Faith.” Waiving also—as questions the unravelling of which is, in reality, little important to man’s salvation—the mysteries of the Divine decrees, he

would perhaps have found that narrower bounds than he had supposed, divided him, in its essential features, from the theological system of *Calvin* himself. Then, with the generous haste that characterized him, and which on a former occasion he had so gracefully evinced,* he would have eagerly retracted the harsh epithets† which he had before applied to the opinions of both these great men. And equally would he have been led to reverse the sentence which he had once so deliberately pronounced,‡ that salvation was alone to be found within the bosom of a church, which he had at length discovered to be so degenerate and fallen!

Yet would his spirit and temper, in denouncing the errors of that Church—heretofore so loved—have been reverend and chastised. His aim would have been, without compromise of truth, to correct, to purify, and to restore. And thus he would have been progressively assimilated in spirit and in design with that noble band of holy and devoted men, who (especially in our own thrice-happy land) achieved and secured, for themselves and their posterity, the blessed work of Reformation, whose benefits we, at this day, enjoy!

This would have been *Protestantism*; and then another enquiry presents itself, to which the patience of the reader may be for a moment further solicited,—what would the character of that Protestantism have been?

To this, the whole tenor of his life and actions may be referred to for an answer. It would have been consistent and manly, cautious yet decided, slowly matured, but unflinchingly maintained. As a controversialist he would have continued, as he ever had been—explicit, direct and intelligible. In *his* writings there would have been no coasting between truth and error, no sophistical distinctions, no mystifying of simple principles, no frittering down of vital doctrines. The author of the Provincial Letters would have ever used the simplest (although the most eloquent) language, to explain his own

* Letter 16, Postscript.

† Letter 18.

‡ Letter 17.

views, and to carry conviction to others. As a member of a church—whether still a layman, or (as is less probable) clothed with the ecclesiastical office—the same characteristics would have distinguished him. The ritual of *his* advocacy would have been decent, solemn, pure; adapted to man as a being of earth, yet an aspirant to heaven. In it there would have been no resuscitation of wisely-forgotten customs, no stealthy resumption of interdicted observances, no *attitudinizing* * in a reverend and holy worship; no sentimentality, in the great business between man and his Maker. The discipline also that he aimed to enforce would have been such as suited free, but sound-hearted men. He would have smiled at the puerility of attempting, in societies enjoying only (perhaps) too much of licence, to re-impose upon conscience rules more stringent than even the law would sanction; and to revive from the dust of ages enactments such as the sounder discretion of jurisprudence allows to sleep undisturbed. Deeply attached to antiquity, he would not have deemed all wisdom and all piety concentrated in the early centuries, or even in mediæval times. Versed—in a degree to which few polemics have attained—in ancient, as well as more recent literature, he would have assigned to each its proper merits, and tested both by the standard of inspired Truth. Revering the clerical body, he would have felt that the laity had also their rights as well as their duties. And, esteeming a pure church, and a scriptural ritual, to be the greatest blessings bestowed upon man, and the source of all good for time and for eternity, he would have scorned the folly, and resented the presumption, that dared to disparage and revile these inestimable benefits; that would seek to cramp the noblest powers of the mind, and weave about it chains which the wisdom and piety of ages had combined indignantly to throw off!

If these conjectures be admissible, who can doubt, further,

* Johnson (in Boswell).

what would have been the result. Persecution would have marked him for its victim; and, unless the growing humanity of the times had interposed, the fires of martyrdom might have been kindled for his destruction. Would he have shrunk from these terrors, or succumbed in the conflict? Assuredly, the same unconquerable spirit, the same zeal for truth, and the same confidence in the holiness of his cause, would have supported him through an ordeal like this, as they had done under his former controversy; and he would have braved the vengeance of an infuriated hierarchy with the same calm intrepidity, with which he meekly awaited the approach of premature decay, from the slow, but more afflictive process of suffering and disease.

It was, indeed, in this manner, rather than that which has been thus placed before the imagination, that it pleased the wisdom of Providence to cut off, in its early bloom, the promise of so much good to France and to Religion. Pascal was removed from the errors and imperfections of earth, to a worship, purer than any to which his ardent wishes had aspired; and his country was destined to remain in nominal subjection to a system of superstition, which the better portion of her intelligence and piety have long combined to reject.

The remarks of M. Villemain, already referred to, upon Pascal's writing, leave little to be said here, which would not impair the effect of his eloquent comments. It has been seen, that this accomplished critic (than whom none can be regarded as better representing the taste and judgment of modern French literature) has not feared to incur the charge of exaggeration, in placing him among the very greatest of writers, ancient or modern. He calls him the creator of the French style, compares his humour to that of Moliere, and asserts that passages in the serious parts of his writings equal the highest efforts of Demosthenes or Chrysostom. In this he does but echo the suffrages of all French critics, particularly those of the last century, who are now looked back upon as

the great arbiters of literary merit. Voltaire, although affecting to undervalue his scientific eminence (which he perhaps could hardly appreciate,) and abhorring his religion, lavishes praise upon the purity and eloquence of his writings. Condorcet declares that his Letters have become the property of all conditions, all minds, and all ages; states that he was the only French writer, up to his time, that had cultivated nature and elegance in style; and enumerates (not hypercritically, but with admiration) about a half-dozen only of phrases that in his day had become objectionable to a fastidious taste. D'Alembert also regards him as having fixed the purity of the language, and says that his idiom (though he wrote a hundred years before) seemed as fresh as that of the most modern authors; and will ever be regarded as a model of taste and style.

The position which Pascal holds in French literature may be regarded as similar to that of Addison in our own. Both contributed, more than any writers who had preceded them, to the purity and grace of their respective languages. But if our own accomplished countryman may be regarded as excelling Pascal, and almost every other writer, in the variety and delicacy of the beauties of his compositions, the latter must be acknowledged greatly to surpass him in strength and elevation. In fact he seems to have anticipated, in his own tongue, qualities which, in ours, it took a century to mature; and to have combined the ease and finish of our Augustan era with the fire and energy of Junius and Burke, and the dignity without the cumbrousness, of Johnson. The more elaborate passages of Burke's didactic compositions will especially remind the reader of some of the noble apostrophes and eloquent bursts scattered throughout the Provincials. And in regard to Junius, it is curious to remark how much his fine compositions seem to have been formed upon the model of Pascal's,* although the

* The imitation extends even to the *interstitial* or parenthetical Letters of *Philo-Junius* occasionally thrown into the series. The anonymous disguise of this writer was however more successfully preserved than that of his predecessor.

latter has far the advantage of his political imitator in the more permanent dignity and importance of his subjects. *

The humour of the Provincial Letters, which is considered by his French eulogists to constitute so high a portion of their merit, will not perhaps quite equal the expectations of those, whose taste is formed upon the breadth and vigour of facetious compositions in our language. The characteristics of Pascal's satire seem to be point and brilliancy, with an excessive refinement and delicacy; and a fastidiousness that almost checks his pen, when he is on the verge of some of those "palpable hits," which a less chastened writer would have perhaps rendered more effective. His story-telling (witness his *Jean D'Alba*) is so delightful, that we feel almost wronged by his niggardliness, when his resources must have been so abundant. Some of the more delicate strokes likewise, may lose a little of their attractiveness by transfusion into another language, and imperfect local and national knowledge; and the nature of the subjects upon which he treated, and his own purity and reserve of disposition, imposed much of becoming restraint upon his evident talent for the ludicrous. As to the serious parts of his writing, however, the language of admiration can scarcely rise too high. The lucid arrangement of his subjects, the sustained argument, the keen, yet measured invective, the impassioned declamation—the abrupt openings, and the magnificent perorations—all combine to fill the mind, to raise the imagination, and to satisfy the taste, to a degree not surpassed by any other efforts of human composition.

But there is a charm occasionally exhibited by these beautiful writings which appears to exceed any that have been

* It has been said that our historian Gibbon was so attached to Pascal's writings, and the "Letters" in particular, that he read them incessantly. If this be true, it is perhaps more surprising that his own artificial, though elegant style of composition, should not have derived more advantage from the study of so pure a model, than that his rigid infidelity was in no degree softened by the contemplation of the writer's simple faith and piety. In such a case as Gibbon's the *taste* was likely, unhappily, to be more accessible than the principles.

enumerated. It is those rests and pauses, that from time to time occur in the conduct of his "high argument," which he seems, with eagerness to embrace, for the purpose of expatiating upon some cherished topic of Christian doctrine or practice; or to pursue a train of dignified exposition of some subject of universal interest. It is then that he seems to let the weapons of controversy fall willingly to the ground; then the ruffled and flattering plumage subsides; and the expanded wing floats calmly and gracefully over the waters of strife and debate. Instances of this nature will occur readily to the reader; such as his repeated inculcation of the necessity of spiritual influences, and the duties of charity and self-denial; his fine analysis of the laws, civil and divine, on the subject of homicide,* the fallibility of the Popes,† and many others.

To conclude, however, these desultory remarks, it ought never to be forgotten, that there were objects proposed by Pascal far higher than the display of his powers as a writer, or the gratification of his readers' taste. The portraiture given in this work of the Jesuit-system and polity would be interesting to the observer of human nature, if the colouring were not that of genius and eloquence; it would be instructive to posterity, if the Society of Jesus had ceased to exist, and its principles were no longer influential upon individuals or communities. In what degree the exhibition now furnished has a bearing upon present times, upon existing circumstances, and passing events, needs here no further comment, but may be most appropriately left to the intelligence and discernment of the British public.

* Letter 14.

† Letter 18.

ERRATA.

PAGE.

MEMOIR, lxxvii. Note, for " occasionilly," read " occasionally."

LETTERS, 67 Note, for " suget," read " sujet."

" 71 line 14, for " favorabilios," read " favorabilior."

" 281 Note, for " calomnia," read " calomnier."

" 378 Note, for " ou," read " on."

APPENDIX, 432 line 12, for " stage," read " state."

PROVINCIAL LETTERS.

LETTER I.

ON THE DISPUTES OF THE SORBONNE.

SIR,

Paris, Jan. 23, 1656.

WE have been imposed upon. It was only yesterday that I was undeceived. Up to that time I had entertained the belief that the disputes in the Sorbonne were upon matters of importance; and especially so to the interests of religion. So many meetings of a body of such celebrity as the Faculty of Theology of Paris, and in which matters of such extraordinary—such unexampled moment had been discussed, led, unavoidably, to the belief, that the subjects under deliberation were of the most vital nature. You will be surprised, then, to learn, by the account I am about to give you,—and on the best information,—what has been the insignificant result of such large preparations.

Two questions were discussed; the one of circumstance, the other of principle—the facts, and the merits, of the case.

The question of fact was, whether M. Arnauld had

been guilty of indiscretion in stating in his second letter, "that he had carefully read Jansenius' book, and had not been able to discover in it the propositions condemned by the late Pope; and yet, being himself opposed to those propositions, wherever they might be found, he was ready to condemn them in Jansenius, provided they were really contained in his work."

The point then raised was, whether he was justified in declaring his doubts that these propositions were to be found in Jansenius, after the reverend the Bishops had asserted that they were in the book?

This question was laid before the Sorbonne. Seventy-one doctors undertook his defence; and maintained that he was not bound to make any other reply than the one he did make to those who had, in such various publications, demanded of him, whether he maintained these propositions to be in the book, unless he had actually seen them there; while at the same time, he professed to condemn them, if they should be proved to be in the work in question.

Some of them even (a little in advance of their brethren) declared, "that after the strictest search, they could find nothing of the kind in the work; but on the contrary, had discovered sentiments quite opposed to the propositions." After this, they categorically demanded that, if any of the learned doctors had themselves seen them, they should point them out—a thing so easy as not to admit of a justifiable refusal; and the most effectual way to silence all the others, and even M. Arnauld himself. This however was uniformly refused. You have now the summary of all that passed upon this point.

On the other hand, there were twenty-four of the Secular, and about forty-six of the Regular Doctors, who condemned M. Arnauld's propositions; without however, examining whether they were true or false; but stating that the question with them was, not as to their truth, but only as to the temerity of the author in propounding them.

There were fifteen others, not in favor of the censure; and who are termed neutrals.

This is the way, then, in which the question of the fact has been settled, about which I do not give myself much concern. Whether M. Arnauld had been rash or not, is no point of conscience with me. And, if curiosity should lead me to enquire, whether these propositions be really to be found in Jansenius, his book is neither so scarce nor so voluminous, but that I may be able to search through the whole of it, without consulting the Sorbonne.

But if I were not apprehensive myself, of appearing indiscreet, I should be of the same mind as most of those around me; who, although hitherto impressed with the belief, that these propositions were to be found in Jansenius, begin now to suspect the contrary, from the strange refusal on the part of his accusers, of all proof to that effect; for never have I yet found any one who could tell me that they had actually seen them there. On this account I fear that this censure will prove to have done more harm than good; and may convey to those unacquainted with its origin, an impression quite opposed to the general conclusion. In truth, people are becoming suspicious, and will believe nothing but what they have really seen.

But, as I have said already, this point is of little importance, since it has nothing to do with any question of faith.

As to the question of principle (the merits of the case) that seemed much more important, inasmuch as it might involve one of faith. On this account, I have taken especial pains to inform myself upon the matter; but you will be much pleased to learn, that this also is as insignificant as the preceding.

The question arose as to what M. Arnauld had said in the same letter, viz. "that Grace, without which man can do nothing, had failed in Peter, at the period of his fall." You and I had both supposed that the question was as to the great principle of grace, whether it had been conferred upon all men, or, at least, whether it is efficacious in all: but we were mistaken. I have speedily become a great theologian; and you shall now see a proof of my proficiency.

In order to get at the truth, I procured an interview with M. N——, a Navarrese doctor, and my near neighbour; who, as you know, is one of the most zealous opponents of the Jansenists: and, as my curiosity rendered me almost equally ardent in the matter with himself, I asked him, whether it had not been formally decided, "that grace is given to all men;" in order that this question might be no longer one of controversy. He replied, however, with some abruptness, that this was *not* the point at issue; that there were some among his party who held, that grace has not been bestowed upon all; that the Examiners themselves had said, in full College, that this opinion is a problematical one; and that he

himself entertained the same view. In confirmation of this he cited a celebrated passage of St. Augustine, "We know that grace is not given to all men."

I begged his excuse for having misapprehended his opinion, and requested him to inform me, whether he did not, at least, condemn that other position of the Jansenists, which had caused so much excitement, viz. that "Grace is effectual, and operates upon our will for the production of good works?" But I was not more fortunate in this, than in my previous enquiry. "You are quite mistaken," he replied; "this is no heresy; it is an orthodox opinion: all the 'Thomists' hold it; and I myself have entertained it as a member of the Sorbonne." I did not dare to explain my doubts to him—and indeed I began to be not very clear wherein my difficulty lay; but in order to get further information, I requested him to inform me, in what the heresy of M. Arnauld consisted. "It is in this," he replied,—“he does not acknowledge that the just have power to perform the commandments of God, in the way in which we understand the matter.”

I left him after this; and, proud of having penetrated to the bottom of the question, I found out M. N—— who was getting gradually better, and was sufficiently recovered to take me to his brother-in-law, a Jansenist, (if ever one was to be found,) yet notwithstanding that, a very good man. To insure a favourable reception, I professed myself quite of his own views, and accosted him thus, "Is it possible that the Sorbonne has introduced into the Church such an error as this, that 'the just have always power to keep the commandments?'" "What do

you mean?" said the doctor to me, "do you call such a Catholic sentiment as this, error—a sentiment that none but Lutherans and Calvinists oppose?" "What," said I, "is this not your opinion?" "No," he replied, "we anathematize it, as impious and heretical." Surprised at this reply, I saw that I had carried the Jansenist too far, as I had before assumed too much of a Molinist; but feeling still uncertain of the real meaning of his answer, I requested him to tell me, in confidence, whether he held, "that the just always possess an actual power to keep the commandments?" My friend, upon this, became warm, (though his zeal plainly originated in devout motives); and said, he should never conceal his opinions, such as they were; "this was his belief," he said, "and he, and all his party would defend them to their last hour, for they were the pure doctrines of St. Thomas and of St. Augustine their master." He spoke so seriously, that I could doubt no longer; and after this confirmation, returned to my learned friend, and said, with much satisfaction, I was sure peace would soon be restored in the Sorbonne; that the Jansenists were agreed as to the power of the just to keep the commandments; that I would answer for them; and had their own word for it, that they would seal the opinion with their blood. "Softly, my friend," said he; "you ought to be a theologian, to understand this matter. The difference between us is so subtle that we can scarcely explain it ourselves: you would have difficulty in apprehending it. Be satisfied to be informed that the Jansenists are right when they assert that the just have power to keep the commandments this is not the matter in dispute: but they do

not tell you that this power is a 'proximate' one.*
is after all the great point."

This word was to me new and unknown. Up to this time I had seen my way; but I was now involved in darkness; and I believe the expression was invented only to perplex the enquiry. I requested him to explain himself; but he became mysterious, and dismissed me, without further satisfaction, to enquire of the Jansenists, whether they allowed of this 'proximate power;' I taxed my memory to recal the word; for as to the understanding it, it was out of all question. And lest it should escape me again, I repaired immediately to my friend the Jansenist; and, after the first civilities had passed, said abruptly, "Tell me, I beg, do you allow of a 'proximate' power?" He laughed, and drily said, "Tell me yourself in what sense you understand the term, and then I will tell you what I believe about it." As my knowledge did not extend so far as this, I was little prepared with a reply; but, not willing wholly to fail in the object of my visit, I said at a venture, "I understand it in the same sense as the Molinists." "Who, my friend?" said he, still coolly, "*which* of the Molinists do you refer to?" I knew of no distinction between them, but supposed them to be all of one party, and to hold the same views.

He rejoined however, "You are under a mistake. So far from being the same, they hold opinions quite opposed to each other. United only in the one object of ruining *M. Arnauld*, they have all agreed to adopt this term 'proximate,' that they may appear to hold the same language, although they put different constructions upon it; and

* 'Prochain.' (Fr.)

thus,¹ through an apparent conformity, may form one large and united body for the purpose of oppressing him the more effectually."

I was surprised at this reply; but being unwilling to adopt these unfavourable impressions of the Molinists upon his word only—and in fact having no interest myself in the matter,—I persisted in my endeavours to ascertain the various senses in which they used this mysterious word.

He replied, "I would inform you with all my heart; but you would find such gross inconsistency and contradiction as you would be scarcely able to credit. You would think I was deceiving you. You would be more satisfied in questioning the parties themselves; and for this purpose, I will refer you to some of them. Call separately upon M. Le Moine and Père Nicolai." "I am not acquainted with either," I said. "See then," he rejoined, "whether you know some of these," naming others: "for they hold the same opinion as M. Le Moine." I found I was acquainted with some of these, and determined to follow his advice, and sift the affair further. I left him; and first of all repaired to one of the disciples of M. Le Moine.

I entreated him to inform me what was the meaning of a "proximate" power to do any thing. "Nothing is more easy," he replied,—"it is to have every thing that is necessary to do any thing, so that nothing is wanting for proceeding to action." "Then," said I, "to have the 'proximate' power of fording a river, is to be provided with a boat, boatmen, oars, and so on; in fact, with every thing needful." "Exactly so," he rejoined. "And

to have the 'proximate' power to see," I added, "is to have good sight and a clear noon-day; for any one having a good sight, in the midst of darkness, would not, as we hold, have a 'proximate' power of seeing; light being wanting, without which no one can see." "Very just," he said. "And, consequently," I continued, "when you say that the just possess a 'proximate' power to keep the commandments, you must understand, that they have all the grace required for obedience, so that nothing is deficient on the part of God." "Listen to me," said he, "they have all that is necessary for obedience, or at least they may ask it of God." "I understand you," I said, "they have all that is required, to pray to God for assistance, without requiring any further grace from God to enable them to pray." "You understand the point," he replied. "But is it not necessary to have an effectual grace in order to pray to God?" "No," he replied, "not according to M. Le Moine."

That I might lose no time, I next proceeded to the Dominicans, and enquired for some whom I knew to be of the party called "New Thomists." I begged them to tell me the meaning of the "proximate" power. "Is it not that," said I, "in which nothing is deficient, but every thing prepared for action?" "No," they answered. "What, my Father, if any thing should be incomplete in the 'power' in question, would you then call it 'proximate'? For instance, would you say of a man in the middle of the night, and without light of any kind, that he had the 'proximate' power to see?" "Doubtless, that is our opinion, if he were not blind." "Very good," said I, "but yet M. Le

Moine seems to think otherwise." "It may be so," they rejoined, "but this is our view." "I understand you perfectly," I said, "as for me, I am not fond of disputing about terms, provided I have a correct idea of the sense in which they are used. But, I now see, that when you say the just have always a 'proximate' power to pray to God, you mean that they require some further assistance, or else they cannot pray at all." "Admirable," cried the Father, embracing me, "Admirable! you know very well that there is an effectual grace required (and which is not conferred upon all men) to incline their will to prayer; and it is therefore heretical to deny the necessity of this 'effectual grace' to enable us to pray."

"This is all very clear," said I, in my turn, "but, according to you, the Jansenists are catholic, and M. Le Moine heretical; for the Jansenists say, the just have power to pray, but nevertheless require effectual grace to do so: and this seems to be your opinion. Now M. Le Moine holds, that the just pray without any effectual grace; and this you condemn." True," said they, "but M. Le Moine calls this power, a 'power proximate.'"

"What! reverend sir," I cried, "why, this is mere trifling with words, to talk of agreement on account of making use of certain common terms, when you differ on the sense of them." The Father made no reply: and at this moment, by a most fortunate coincidence, as I considered it, my friend, M. Le Moine's pupil arrived; although I have since found that their meetings are not infrequent.

Upon this, I said to my friend, "I am acquainted with a person who maintains that all just persons have the power of praying to God; but that, nevertheless, they

will never pray without an effectual grace to incline them to do so; and this God does not grant to all just persons. Is he a 'heretic?' "Stay," said the Doctor; "you take me by surprise; let us proceed quietly; 'distinguo.' If he call this a 'proximate power,' he is a Thomist, and so far, a Catholic; if not, he is a Jansenist, and then a Heretic." "He does not call it," said I, "either 'proximate,' or 'not proximate.'" "Then he is a heretic," he rejoined; "ask these worthy Fathers." I was not disposed to refer again for their judgment, as their assenting nods had already declared their opinion; but I said to them, "He refuses to admit this word 'proximate;' for he can get no explanation of it." On this, one of the Fathers was about to make another attempt at explanation, but he was interrupted by the pupil of M. Le Moine, saying, "Do not let us begin our broils again. Have we not agreed not to explain this word 'proximate,' but to pass it on from one to another without saying what is meant by it?" To this the Dominican assented.

By this time I saw their design; and rising to take leave, I said, "Truly, reverend Fathers, I am greatly afraid that all this is mere trickery on your part; and, whatever else may result from your councils, I venture to predict that, when your censures shall be pronounced, peace will not be restored. For when you have decided that these mere syllables '*pro-chain*,' (proximate) shall be adopted, who can doubt, that—no definite meaning being attached to them, each of you will claim the victory? The Dominican will say that the word is to be understood in their sense; and thus, there will be more dispute upon its proper explanation, than upon its introduction: for, after all,

what great danger will there be in receiving it when no particular sense is assigned to it? It is the meaning only that can make it hurtful. But surely it would be unworthy both of the Sorbonne and of the theology they teach, to use equivocal and deceptive terms, without affording any explanation of them. Therefore, Fathers, for the last time, I entreat you tell me, what it is that, as a Catholic, I ought to believe?" "You ought," said they, speaking all together, "to acknowledge that all the just have the 'proximate power,' but in a certain abstract sense: *abstrahendo a sensu Thomistarum, et a sensu aliorum theologorum.*"

"That is," said I, as I departed, "you must pronounce certain words with the lips, to avoid the stigma of heresy. But, after all, is this word to be found in the Scriptures?" "No," they replied. "Is it then, in the Fathers, or the Councils; or authorised by the Papacy?" "No." "Is it in St. Thomas?" "No." "Why then must it be used, if there is no authority for it, and no meaning in it?" "You are obstinate," said they, "You must use it, or you are a Heretic, and M. Arnauld, also: for we are the most numerous party; and if necessary, we can get as many Grey-Friars as we wish, and carry the day upon the question."

On hearing the last reason, I left them, to send you the preceding account; by which you will see, that there is no real controversy upon any of the following points, but that they remain uncondemned on one side as well as the other, viz. "1. Grace is not given to all men. 2. The just have always the power to obey God's commandments. 3. They need, nevertheless, for obeying the com-

mandments, and even to enable them to pray, an effectual grace, to constrain and influence the will. 4. This effectual grace is not bestowed upon all men, but results from the pure mercy of God." So that, after all, there is no danger but in the mere word 'proximate;' and that, without having any definite meaning attached to it.

Happy those who never heard it! happy those who lived before its invention! For I see no remedy, but for the Academy, by the exercise of their prerogative, to banish from the Sorbonne this barbarous word, which occasions so much discord. Unless this be done, the censure will certainly be pronounced; but I consider that it will have no other effect than to lower the Sorbonne, and to diminish its authority in carrying on successfully future controversies.

As to yourself, I leave you full liberty to adhere to the term 'proximate,' or not; for I love you too well to make this a source of molestation. If these details should prove not unacceptable, I will continue to inform you of what passes; and, in the meantime, I am, &c. &c.

LETTER II.

ON A SUFFICIENCY OF GRACE.

SIR,

Paris, Jan. 29, 1656.

JUST as I had closed my last letter, I was, fortunately for the satisfaction of my curiosity, visited by your old friend M. N., for he is thoroughly well-informed upon the popular topics, and intimately acquainted with all the secrets of the Jesuits;—in fact he is on terms of familiarity with their Principals, and sees them all continually. After mentioning the object of his visit, I requested him to tell me precisely what were the points in debate between the two parties.

He proceeded at once to satisfy me, and informed me there were two especial questions: the one respecting the “proximate power;” the second respecting “sufficient grace.”* I gave you in my last letter, the history of the former; I will now proceed to acquaint you with that of the latter.

I found then, in a word, that the controversy respecting this “sufficient grace,” consists herein. The Jesuits maintain that a certain measure of grace is given to men

* ‘ Grace suffisante’ (Fr.)

generally, yet, so far subjected to their free will, as to be rendered either effectual or otherwise, without any further aid from God; and that it needs nothing more to render it productive and efficient; which gives rise to the appellation "sufficient," it being of itself sufficient for active purposes. On the other hand, the Jansenists hold that there is no sufficient grace, which is not effectual also; in other words, that grace which does not incline the will to effective action, is insufficient for action; because as they maintain, none can act without "effectual grace." This is their point of difference.

And, in reference to the doctrines of the new Sect of Thomists, he gave me the information which follows. They were eccentric and inconsistent; they agree with the Jesuits, that a sufficiency of grace is enjoyed by all men; but they assert, nevertheless, that none can produce works with this grace alone, and that, for this purpose, God must bestow upon them an "effectual grace," by which their will must be impelled to act; and which latter is not bestowed upon all men. "Therefore," said I, "according to this doctrine, the grace in question is sufficient, and insufficient."—"Just so," he replied, "for if it be sufficient, nothing more can be required; if insufficient, why then—it is insufficient."

"But then," I said again, "what is the difference between them and the Jansenists?" "There is this difference," he said, "the Dominicans are entitled to this credit, that they never fail to say, that all men have sufficiency of grace." "I understand you," he replied, "but they say this without reflection; for they add, that, in order to act, it is necessary to enjoy an 'effectual

grace,' which is not bestowed upon all men. Thus they agree with the Jesuits, in using an unmeaning term; they differ from them, and hold with the Jansenists, in substance and reality." "You are right," he said. "How is it then," I enquired, "that the Jesuits have made common cause with them, and that they do not oppose them, as they do the Jansenists? Surely they must find them powerful adversaries, holding as they do the necessity of an effectual grace to determine the will, and thus opposing their own favorite positions?"

"The Dominicans are powerful," he added, "and the society of Jesuits are too politic to crush them openly. It is sufficient for their purpose that they have been brought to allow the term, "sufficient grace;" although they understand it in a different sense. They thus have this advantage over them, that their opinions are put down as untenable, whenever it serves a purpose to do so—a thing easily accomplished. For supposing all men to have a sufficiency of grace, nothing is more natural than the inference, that effectual grace is not necessary for good works; since the sufficiency of this general grace would supersede the necessity of any other. The very term "sufficient," denotes all that is necessary for action; and it would little avail the Dominicans, to allege that they attach a different sense to it. The public, accustomed to understand it in a natural and ordinary way, would pay no attention to their explanatory glosses. The society thus derives an important advantage from the reception, by the Dominicans (in common with themselves) of the term in question; and have no wish to push it further. If you were acquainted with all that

passed in the Papacies of Clement VIII, and Paul V, and to what an extent the Society was thwarted by the Dominicans, in its endeavours to establish a "sufficient grace," you would not wonder that they are not willing to embroil themselves with them again; and allow them to maintain their opinions, provided their own remain free. And this the more especially, as the Dominicans themselves encourage them, by consenting publicly to the use of the term in question.

The society is well pleased with their docility. They do not demand a denial of the necessity of "effectual grace,"—this would be pressing them too hard: friends should not be treated with harshness: the Jesuits have obtained sufficient advantages. The world uses words as its coins; few investigate for themselves: and thus, the term "sufficient grace," being received on both sides, although in different senses, none but acute Theologians suppose that the thing signified by the words is not held equally by Jacobins and Jesuits; and the result will show that the latter are not among the greatest of the dupes.

I confessed that they were ingenious people; and in order to avail myself of the information I had acquired, I repaired at once to the Dominicans. At their door I found a friend of mine—a great Jansenist—for I have friends of all parties,) who was enquiring for one of the Fathers, although not the one of whom I was in search. I prevailed upon him however, to accompany me, and enquired for one of my new friends the Thomists. He was delighted to see me. "Well, my Father," I said, "it is not sufficient, it seems, for all men to possess a 'proximate power,' by means of which, however, they do

nothing; they must have also a 'sufficient grace,' by which they still do little enough. Is not this the opinion held by your school?" "Yes," replied the good Father, "I have this very morning asserted the position at the Sorbonne. I occupied my *half-hour* in descanting upon it; and, without the assistance of my *hour-glass*, I could have disproved the saucy proverb, which is circulating through Paris, "He votes blindfold, like a Monk of the Sorbonne." "Hour-glass, half-hour! what is all this about?" I said; "are your speeches regulated by measure and time?" "Yes," he replied, "for some days past they have been so." "And do they compel you to speak for exactly half an hour at a time?" "No: we may speak for as *short* a time as we please." "But not as long as you like?" I rejoined: "Oh, fortunate regulation for the ignorant! Oh, most considerate arrangement for those who have nothing to say!"

"But, after all, my good Father, tell me, is this grace which is bestowed upon all, 'a sufficient grace?'" "Certainly," he replied. "And yet it is of no use without the 'effectual grace?'" "Quite true," said he. "That is," I said, "all men have grace enough, and not enough; that is to say, the grace is sufficient and not sufficient; that is to say, it is sufficient in name, but insufficient in reality. Truly, Father, your doctrine is sufficiently refined. In shutting yourself out from the world, have you forgotten the meaning of words? Don't you remember that "sufficient" implies all that is required for action? You cannot have lost all memory in these matters, for, (to give a familiar illustration) if, at table, you were helped to two ounces of bread, and one

glass of water a day, would you be satisfied with your Prior, stating, that this would be sufficient to support you : and that, provided you had a few other articles (with which however he did not supply you) you would then have all that would be necessary for your sustenance ? How can you then pretend to say that all have a sufficiency of grace for producing good works, while you acknowledge that there is a further grace required for such works, which all men do not enjoy ? Is such an article of belief unimportant ; and do you leave it to men's own fancy whether effectual grace is necessary or not ? Is it a matter of indifference to say that with sufficient grace we can work effectually ? " How," said this worthy man, " 'indifference !' It 'is a heresy—a deliberate heresy ! The need of an effectual grace for effective working is a point of faith : it is heresy to deny it."

" Where are we then ? " I exclaimed ; " and what side am I to take ? If I deny a sufficient grace, I am a Jansenist. If I admit it, like the Jesuits, and hold that an effective grace is not necessary, you say I am a heretic. And if I admit it like yourself, and maintain that effectual grace is necessary, I offend against common sense ;—I am 'absurd,' say the Jesuits. What am I to do, under this inevitable dilemma of being, either absurd, or heretical, or a Jansenist ? And to what a situation are we brought, if it is only the Jansenists who are not perplexed between faith and reason, and who alone escape from folly and error ? "

My Jansenist friend considered these remarks a good omen, and thought me already won over to his side. He said nothing however to me ; but, addressing the

‘Thomist,’ “Tell me, Father,” he said, “in what it is that you agree with the Jesuits?” “It is,” he replied, “in this; the Jesuits and ourselves hold ‘sufficient grace’ to be bestowed upon all men.” “But,” rejoined the Jansenist, “names only are empty sounds—it is the thing signified, that is reality and substance. And thus, when you agree with the Jesuits in using the word ‘sufficient’ and differ from them in its meaning, it is evident that you are opposed to each other respecting the substance of the term, and agreed only as to the sound. Is this acting sincerely, and in good faith?” “Well,” said the worthy man, “what, after all, have you to complain of; we deceive no one by our way of speaking. For in our schools we openly say that we understand the matter in a different way from the Jesuits.” “My complaint is,” replied my friend, “that you do not declare every where, that you understand by ‘sufficient grace,’ what is in reality, not ‘sufficient.’ You ought in conscience, while you thus change the meaning of the ordinary terms in Theology, to explain, that, in allowing a ‘sufficient’ grace to exist in all men, you mean that in reality, they have not a ‘sufficient’ grace. All the world, except yourselves, understand the word ‘sufficient’ in the same way: it is the new ‘Thomists’ alone who interpret it differently. All the women (who compose half the world) all court-persons—Soldiers—Magistrates—all the people about the palace,—merchants,—artizans—the lower classes; in short, persons of all description (except the *Dominicans*) understand by ‘sufficient,’ that which includes every thing necessary. Who has ever been apprized of this peculiarity in their belief? Nothing more

is known—and that all over the world—than that the Dominicans hold ‘all men to enjoy a sufficiency of grace.’* What are we to conclude they mean by this, but that all have grace sufficient for the production of works; the more especially, as they are seen to be united in common interests and policy with the Jesuits, who understand the matter in the same way? The identity of their expression, together with this union in party feeling, is surely a proof of a similarity of interpretation; and cannot but tend to a belief of the entire uniformity of their opinion.”

“The faithful constantly enquire of Theologians—What is the real state of nature since the fall? St. Augustine and his disciples reply, that it no longer enjoys grace, except in such measures as God may please to dispense it. The Jesuits hereon affirm, that all have in reality sufficiency of grace. The Dominicans are consulted upon this contrariety: what part do they take? They make common cause with the Jesuits; by this union they constitute a majority. They separate from those who deny the sufficiency of grace; they declare that all men are endowed with it. What are we to conclude from this, but that they give their sanction to the views of the Jesuits? And then they add that, notwithstanding all this, the ‘sufficient’ grace in question is useless, without that efficiency, which is not bestowed upon all!

Would you behold a portrait of a church in which these various opinions are held? I consider it to be like a man, who, setting out on a journey from his own country, is encountered by robbers, who overpower him with

* ‘Des graces suffisantes.’ (Fr.)

wounds, and leave him half dead. He sends for aid to three surgeons in the neighbouring town. The first, on examining his wounds, pronounces them mortal, and tells him that God alone can restore him. The second, coming up forthwith, proceeds to comfort him ; tells him he has strength enough to carry him back to his dwelling, and taunts his rival on the opinion he had just expressed. The patient, perplexed between the two, perceives the third approaching him, and beckons to him to relieve his anxieties. This latter, after examining the case, and weighing the opinions of the two others, makes common cause with the second ; and the two thus agreed, unite against the first, and chase him with opprobrium from the field. The patient supposes from this that the third doctor had agreed in opinion with the second ; and, in fact, receives, in reply to his anxious enquiries, an assurance that he has strength sufficient to prosecute his journey. The poor man, however, conscious of his weakness, asks, on what his conclusions are founded ? “ Because,” said he, “ you still have your legs, and the legs are the natural organs for walking.” “ But,” says the sick man, “ have I strength to make use of them ; for they seem to me useless, in my state of weakness ? ” “ Certainly not,” replied the doctor ; “ and in reality you never will walk, unless God shall send you supernatural aid to sustain and lead you.” “ What ! ” cries the patient, “ Have I not then in myself sufficient strength for walking ? ” “ Very far from it,” replied the surgeon. “ Your opinion then is entirely opposed to your companion’s respecting my state ? ” “ I confess it is,” he replied.

What do you suppose the patient said on this? He complained of the inconsistency, and ambiguous expressions of the third of these doctors. He blamed him for allying himself with the second, to whom he was in reality opposed, and with whom he had no apparent ground of agreement; and for having repudiated the first, with whom he actually agreed. And when he had tried the extent of his strength, and ascertained its failure, he dismissed them both; and, recalling the first, placed himself implicitly in his hands. Then, in conformity with his advice, he entreated of God the strength, of which he was in himself destitute; he found mercy; and by the aid he received from above, arrived in safety at his own home.

The good Father was struck with the fable, and made no reply. To encourage him to proceed, I said, quietly, "But, after all, my father, how is it that you gave the name 'sufficient' to this grace, while you regard it as an article of faith, to believe it to be in reality insufficient?" "It is easy for you to talk thus," he replied, "you are only an individual, and independent; I am a member of a religious community. Do you not perceive the difference? *We* depend upon our superiors, they in their turn, look to others. They have made themselves answerable for our votes; what would you have me do?" We understood him at once, and remembered his brother, who was exiled to Abbeville, on occasion of a similar controversy.

"But," said I, "how is it that your community was prevailed upon to acknowledge this doctrine of grace?" "That is another question," said he, "all I can say is, that our order did all that was in their power to support

the doctrine of St. Thomas, respecting efficacious grace. How ardently did we oppose, at its very birth, the doctrine of Molina! How did we strive to establish the necessity of the effectual grace of Christ! Are you not aware what was done during the popedom of Clement VIII, and Paul V; and that when death had prevented the one from publishing his Bull, and important affairs of government the other, we still continued our importunities with the Vatican? But the Jesuits, who, from the commencement of the heresies of Luther and Calvin, had taken advantage of the scanty measure of ability in the people to distinguish the error from the truth in the doctrines of St. Thomas, soon succeeded in diffusing their own view; and that to such an extent that they became masters over their faith; and we were in danger of being decried as Calvinists, and treated as the Jansenists are at present, unless we modified the dogma of an 'effectual' grace, by some acknowledgment—(at least in appearance) of—that which is termed 'sufficient.' In this emergency, what could we do better, to assist in supporting the truth without sacrificing our own credit, than to admit the term 'sufficient' grace, while we denied it in reality? This is the real fact of the case."

The father said all this with so melancholy an air, that he excited my pity. Not so, however, that of my companion, who exclaimed; "Flatter not yourselves that you have supported the truth: had she found no better protectors than you, she would have perished under hands so feeble! You have admitted into the church an enemy in name;—where is the difference between that and admitting the enemy himself? Names are inseparable from

things. If the term sufficient grace be once allowed, you may affirm as you please, that you mean a grace that is insufficient—you will not be believed. Your explanation will but procure you the contempt of the world; they are more sincere in matters of less importance. The Jesuits will exult; they will establish their 'sufficient' grace in reality, while yours will be discarded; and they will succeed in enforcing an article of belief wholly opposed to your own!"

"We are all ready to endure martyrdom," replied the father, "rather than consent to the imposition of a 'sufficient' grace in the sense of the Jesuits; St. Thomas, whom we have sworn to follow even to death, is directly opposed to it." Upon this my friend, more zealous upon the question than myself, thus exclaimed: "Away! away with these sophistries! Your order has had an honour committed to it, of which it proves itself unworthy. It abandons that doctrine of grace which was entrusted to its keeping, and which has never been wholly lost since the creation of the world! That all-conquering grace, which was waited for by the patriarchs, predicted by prophets, brought in by Jesus Christ; preached by St. Paul, expounded by St. Augustine (the greatest of the fathers,) embraced by his successors, which was confirmed by St. Bernard (the latest of the fathers,) maintained by St. Thomas (the head of your own school,)—from him transmitted to your order, and maintained and gloriously defended by multitudes of your fathers, under the popedom of Clement and Paul. That effectual grace, committed as a sacred deposit to your custody, that in a holy order and perpetual succession it

might be published to the world to the end of time—that precious doctrine is now cast off and abandoned, for the most unworthy considerations! It is time that other champions should arm for the conflict! It is time that the Almighty should summon new, and more intrepid disciples, for the inculcation of His grace; men, who, knowing nothing of the conventional subtleties of the day, shall serve God for His own sake. Grace may no longer have the Dominicans for defenders, but she will never want support. She will herself mould and inspire her scholars by her own omnipotent power. She asks for hearts, pure and unfettered by worldly trammels; she sanctifies and disengages them from interests and entanglements incompatible with the truth of the gospel. Weigh this, my father, and take heed lest God should remove your light from its place, and leave you in darkness and dishonour, as a punishment for coldness and treachery to a cause so momentous as this to his Church!”

He would have added more, for he was kindling fast with his theme; when I interposed, and rising to depart, said, “Truly, my father, if I were a person of importance in France, I would proclaim as with a trumpet, ‘This is to give notice, that when the Dominicans say that sufficient grace is given to all, they mean, that all have not grace, ‘effectually sufficient.’ After which you may say what you please: but not otherwise.” Thus ended our visit.

You see from this, that there is a political ‘sufficiency,’ as there is a ‘proximate’ power. Nevertheless, you may take my word for it, that we may without risk entertain doubt of a ‘proximate’ power, as well as of a ‘sufficient’ grace, provided we are no Dominicans.

Just while I am closing my letter, I am informed that the Censure has been pronounced; but as I have not heard the particulars of it, and it will not be published till the 15th of Feb., I will say no more on the subject till the next post. In the mean time, I am, &c.

Reply of the "Provincial" to the two preceding Letters from his Friend.

SIR,

Feb. 2, 1656.

YOUR two letters have not been kept to myself. Every one sees them, every one hears, every one believes them. They are not only valued by theologians, but they are agreeable to men of the world; and even intelligible to female readers.

The following has been addressed to me by a member of the Academy—one of the most eminent among so many distinguished men—and who has seen only the first of the letters. “I wish the Sorbonne, which is so much indebted to the memory of the late Cardinal, would acknowledge the authority of its own ‘Academie Francaise.’ The author of the letter should then be satisfied; for in the capacity of an academician I would condemn, I would proscribe, I would banish—I could almost say, I would exterminate this ‘proximate power,’ which causes so much disturbance for nothing, and as to which none can tell what it is that it requires. The evil is that our academical authority is very weak and limited. I am sorry for it; and I am equally so that I have so little power to discharge my obligations to you, &c. &c.”

And thus again writes a person (whom I abstain in any way from designating), to a lady who had communicated to him your first letter :—

“ I am more obliged to you than you can imagine, for the letter you have sent me : it is highly ingenious, and admirably written. It narrates, without aiming at narrative ; it elucidates matters of the most complicated description ; its raillery is delicate ; it is instructive to those who are slenderly informed ; and it affords pleasure to the learned. It is besides, an admirable apology, and—to those who will apply it—a delicate and gentle censure. In short, there is so much skill, so much wit and judgment in the letter, that I should be glad to know who is the author,* &c. &c.”

You would like also to know who it is that writes to me in this manner, but be contented to *honour* without knowing him ; and when you know him you will honour him more.

Continue your letters on my recommendation ; and let the Censure come when it may, we shall be well prepared to meet it. These words—their ‘ proximate power ’ and ‘ sufficient grace,’—with which they threaten us, occasion us no apprehension. We are too well acquainted with the Jesuits, the Jacobins, and M. Le Moine—how many aspects they can exhibit, and the little value of the new terms—to give ourselves much concern about them. Notwithstanding, I remain, &c. &c.”

* No explanation as to the authorship of this letter is given in the French edition ; but it was probably by a different hand, as it is little likely that Pascal would have applied expressions so laudatory, although just, to his own composition. (Translator.)

LETTER III.

(INTENDED AS A REPLY TO THE PRECEDING.)

INJUSTICE, ABSURDITY, AND INSIGNIFICANCE OF THE CENSURE OF M. ARNAULD.

SIR,

I HAVE just received your letter ; and at the same time was furnished with a manuscript copy of the Censure. I seem to be as *well* treated in the one, as M. Arnauld is treated ill in the other. I am afraid there is some exaggeration on both sides ; and that we are neither of us sufficiently known to our judges. If it were otherwise, I am satisfied that M. Arnauld would be found to deserve the approbation of the Sorbonne, and I the censure of the Academy. Our interests are consequently different. He ought to be better known, that his innocence might be made apparent ; whereas, I must remain in concealment, in order not to *lose* my character. Under these circumstances, being unable to discover myself, I look to you to keep up my favour with my celebrated eulogists ; and it shall be my business now to give you all necessary information respecting the Censure.

I must confess to you, Sir, that I was much surprised

at it. I expected to find in it a condemnation of the most dreadful heresies; but you will wonder with me to see such vast preparations subside into nothing, when they seemed on the point of producing such important results.

All this will however be a source of satisfaction to you, if you remember the extraordinary impressions which so long prevailed respecting the Jansenists. Recal to mind the intrigues, the factions, the errors, the schisms, the plots, which were so long attributed to them; how they were decried and calumniated in pulpits and publications; and how the torrent of aspersion, so violent and long-continued, was aggravated of late years by open and public charges, not only of heresies and schism, but of apostacy and infidelity—"that they disbelieved the mystery of transubstantiation, and denied both Christ and the gospel."

After all these extraordinary accusations,* it was determined, in order to come to a solemn conclusion, to institute an examination into their works. The second letter of M. Arnauld was selected for the purpose, it being alleged to contain the most signal errors.† His avowed enemies were appointed examiners; all possible diligence was used to discover the object of their search; and they report *one* proposition respecting the doctrine in question, which they deem of a censurable nature.

What was to be inferred from these proceedings, but that this proposition, selected under such peculiar circumstances, must contain the essence of the darkest heresies

* Var. Edit. 1657. 'Si atroces.'

† Idem. 'Detestabiles.'

that could possibly be imagined? Nevertheless, nothing was in reality found in it, but what had been so clearly and distinctly laid down in passages from the fathers, cited by M. Arnauld, that I have never been able to find any one who could see any difference between them. It was fancied however that there could not but be a great difference, because the passages from the fathers were incontestibly catholic, but M. Arnauld's proposition *must* be heretical, and therefore opposed to them.

The Sorbonne was looked to for the solution of the difficulty. All Christendom had its eyes fixed upon these learned doctors, anxious to see how their decision would discriminate this point, so imperceptible to ordinary observers. In the mean time, M. Arnauld put forth his Apology, in which he gave, in parallel columns, his own proposition, and the passages from the Fathers on which it was based; in order that understandings of the lowest order might perceive the conformity between them.

He shows that St. Augustine says, in a passage which he quotes, "Jesus Christ exhibits to us an instance of a just person in St. Peter, and teaches us, from his fall, to beware of presumption." He cites again from the same Father what follows: "God left St. Peter without grace, in order to show us, that without grace we can do nothing." He gives another extract from St. Chrysostom in the following terms: "The fall of St. Peter was not caused by any want of affection towards Christ, but by failure of grace; it was the effect, not so much of his own negligence, as of God's abandonment of him; to teach the Church that without Him we can do nothing." Hereupon he produces his own condemned proposition, which runs as follows:

“The Fathers exhibit to us in St. Peter a just person, who failed of grace, without which we can do nothing.”

This then is what they adduce, to prove that M. Arnauld's expressions are as much opposed to the Fathers as truth is to error, and faith to heresy. Now, where lies the difference? Is it in this—“The Fathers exhibit to us a just person in St. Peter?” Why, St. Augustine says the same, and in the same words. Is it where he asserts, “Grace failed him?” The self-same Augustine, who stated that St. Peter was a just person, adds, “Under that temptation he had no grace.” Is it again in the following, “Without grace we can do nothing?” Have we not here the very same thing which St. Augustine affirms in the same place (and St. Chrysostom had declared it before him), with this difference only, that he expresses himself yet more strongly: “His fall was not caused by any coldness or negligence, but by failure of grace, and abandonment of God.”

Every one therefore continued in undiminished suspense, to learn in what these differences consisted; when they found a censure pronounced by so high an authority, and after such mature deliberation. Alas! our expectations have been little fulfilled. Whether the doctors would not condescend to enlighten us, or whatever was the cause, they did nothing more than pronounce these words, “This proposition is rash, impious, blasphemous, accursed, and heretical.”

Was it probable, Sir, that the generality of persons, finding their expectations thus disappointed, would take part with the censurers? They drew from their conduct inferences the most favourable that were possible for

M. Arnauld's innocence. "What! they said, is this all that comes of the proceeding? After such lapse of time, with persons of such learning—so many, also, conspiring against one—to find, throughout all his writings, but three lines to censure; and those drawn from the very words of the greatest authorities in the Greek and Latin Churches! Is there a single author to be found, who, if matters of accusation were sought against him, would not furnish from his pages more plausible ground of censure? What stronger proof, then, can be furnished of the soundness of the faith of this eminent man, thus unjustly accused?"

"How is it," they proceeded, "that such imprecations are heaped together—'poison, pestilence, horror, rashness, impiety, blasphemy, abominations, execrations, anathemas, heresy,'—terms, than which none more virulent could be directed against Arius, or, even Antichrist himself; and all to oppose a heresy absolutely imperceptible, and, as yet, undiscovered? If all these obloquies be directed against the actual words of the Fathers, what becomes of faith and of tradition? If these be opposed to M. Arnauld's proposition, let them show us wherein lies the difference: to us there seems a perfect coincidence between them. If we could be brought to see the error, we should hold it in detestation; but if unable to do so—if we can find nothing but the sentiments of the Fathers, conceived and expressed in their own words, how can we do otherwise than hold the author of them in undiminished veneration?"

This is the way in which some people canvass the questions at issue; but I confess, they are, after all, too

difficult for us. We, not pretending to penetrate so deeply into things, keep ourselves quiet in the matter. Ought we to be wiser than our superiors? Do not let us attempt to go beyond them—we shall but get into a labyrinth. The line of truth is so narrow, that, on the slightest deviation, we fall into error; then again, the error is so subtle, that a slight remove brings us back to truth. There is certainly but an imperceptible point between the proposition in question and the orthodox faith. The distance is so minute, that I, for my part, am fearful lest (overlooking the boundary), while I am endeavouring to prove my devotedness to the doctors of the Sorbonne, I bring myself into collision with the authorities of the Church.

Under this apprehension, I have thought it advisable to consult one of those persons who, from motives of policy, had remained neutral upon the original question; and endeavour to learn from him the real state of the case. I found out one who was very experienced in these matters, and begged him to give me an explanation of the distinction in question, professing my own inability to discover it myself.

“What!” replied he, smiling, as if amused at my *naïveté*, “you are not simple enough to think there is any difference? Where is it to be found? Do you believe that, if it had been discoverable, it would not have been held up plainly to view; and that they would not have been delighted to expose it, in the same spirit in which they were found running M. Arnauld down?”

I saw from these few words, that those who had been neutral upon the first question, had not been equally so

upon the second. I did not fail, however, to hear out his reasons, and said, "Why then did they attack this proposition?" Upon which he rejoined; "Are you unacquainted then with these two things, which people the most uninformed in the world know? The one is, that M. Arnauld has always avoided saying any thing that is not distinctly founded on the traditions of the Church; the other, that his enemies have, notwithstanding, determined to put him down, by whatever means could be found? Thus, as the writings of the one furnished no handle to the designs of the other, they have been obliged, in order to satisfy their resentment, to take the first proposition that came to hand, and pass sentence upon it, without saying why, or wherefore. Are you not aware that the Jansenists hold them so much in check, and press them so hard, that on the least word escaping them contrary to the principles of the Fathers, they are immediately overwhelmed by whole volumes of controversy, and forced to surrender? So after all these proofs of weakness, they have thought it more convenient and easier to condemn than to reply; and *monks* are to be found in more abundance than *reasons*."

"How!" I exclaimed, "if that be the case, their Censure is nugatory. What credit can be given to it, when it is proved to be wholly unfounded; and annihilated by the answers that have been furnished to it?" "If you were acquainted with the spirit of these people," the doctor replied, "you would think differently. Their censure (although in itself censurable) will, for a time, produce all the effect they wish; even the very act of demonstrating its weakness will give it publicity; and it is

incontestible, that the majority will be as much impressed as if it were the most veracious proceeding in the world. If people were to cry in the streets, ‘ This is the censure of M. Arnauld, this is the condemnation of the Jansenists ; ’ the Jesuits would make their account of it. How few would read it ! How few, who read, will understand it ! How few will perceive that it does not meet the objections made to it ! Who, do you imagine, gives any attention to these things ; and takes the trouble to investigate and think ? See then how serviceable all this is to the enemies of the Jansenists. They are sure, by such means, of a present triumph ; although, as usual, it will prove, in the end, a vain achievement. It will last out some months—that is a great point for them : after that, they will find something also to subsist upon. They live from hand to mouth. In this way it is that they keep themselves afloat. Sometimes it is by a catechism, in which a child is made to condemn its opponents ; sometimes by a procession, in which “ sufficient grace ” leads in triumph “ effectual grace ; ” now it is by a play, in which devils are seen carrying off the Jansenists ; another time it is by an almanack ; just now it is by the Censure.”

“ Truly,” said I, “ I could not much approve the proceedings of these Molinists ; but after all you have told me, I must admire their prudence and their policy. I plainly see that they could not have acted with more judgment, or in a way better calculated to attain their purpose.” “ You are right,” he rejoined, “ the safe plan with them has always been to be *silent*. As a learned theologian said of them, ‘ The cleverest among the body are those who intrigue much, say little, and write nothing.’ ”

“ Acting upon this plan, they determined, from the commencement of their proceedings, that if M. Arnauld should appear before the Sorbonne, it should be simply to avow his tenets, not to enter the lists of controversy with any one. The examiners having somewhat deviated from the method, found they did not get on the better for it. They were very summarily refuted by his Second ‘ Apology.’

“ It was in the same spirit that they adopted that ingenious and novel invention of the ‘ sand ’ and the ‘ half-hour.’ They escaped by this method the importunity of those irritated professors, who took upon them to refute all their reasonings, to produce old volumes in disproof of their falsehoods, to call upon them for replies, and yet to reduce them to an incapability of replying.

“ They were not insensible that this infringement of the liberty of speech, which had caused so many of the doctors to retire from their meetings, would not propitiate favour to their censure; and that M. Arnauld’s protest, maintaining the nullity of their proceedings, would prove any thing but advantageous to its favourable reception. They were fully aware that unprejudiced persons would give quite as much weight to the judgment of sixty doctors, who had nothing to gain by defending M. Arnauld, as of a hundred others, who had nothing to lose by condemning him.

“ But, after all, they thought it was a great point to procure a censure; although it emanated from only a part of the Sorbonne, and not the whole body; although it was pronounced under little or no real freedom of judgment, and obtained by numerous petty (and not the most

regular) manœuvres ; although it entered into no explanation of the matters really in dispute ; although it gave no indication of what constituted the heresy in question ; and, in fact, it said very little, from fear of being misunderstood. This very silence even carries with it an air of mystery to the unreflecting ; and the censure derives from it this singular advantage, that the most critical and subtle theologians can find throughout it no *bad* reasonings.

“ Keep your mind tranquil, then, and have no fear of being set down as a heretic for adopting the censured proposition. There was no harm in it until the appearance of M. Arnauld’s second letter. Do you doubt my assertion ? You will credit then M. Le Moine, the most zealous of the examiners, who, in conversation only this morning with a doctor, a friend of mine, who had been enquiring of him about these disputes, and desired to know whether it was not allowable to say what had been said before by the Fathers, thus admirably replied— ‘ This proposition would have been Catholic in the mouth of any other person ; it is only because it came from M. Arnauld, that it has been condemned by the Sorbonne.’ Admire then, I pray you, the policy of ‘ Molinism,’ in producing such revolutions in the church, that what is Catholic in the Fathers becomes heretical in M. Arnauld ; that what was heretical in the semi-Pelagians is found to be orthodox in the writings of the Jesuits ; that doctrines as ancient as St. Augustine are discovered to be an unbearable novelty ; and that the passing crudities of the day are palmed off as the venerable tenets of the church ! ” Upon this my friend took his leave.

The information I thus acquired was enough for me. I learned that this was heresy of a novel description. It is not the opinions of M. Arnauld that are heretical ; it is *himself*. It is a personal heresy. He is no heretic for any thing he has said, or written, but simply that he is M. Arnauld. This is all that can be charged against him. Do what he will, he must cease to *be*, or he cannot be a good Catholic. The grace of St. Augustine will never be the true grace, as long as *he* defends it. Let him oppose, and it becomes genuine at once. It would be a sure game, and almost the only way to establish it ; as well as to destroy ' Molinism : ' so fatal does he prove to all the opinions that he embraces !

Let us leave them then to their disputes. They are the controversies of theologians, not of *theology*. We, who are no doctors, need not trouble ourselves with their dissensions. Acquaint our friends with this history of the censure, and believe me ever your attached friend, &c. &c.

LETTER IV.

OF GRACE 'ACTUELLE,' ALWAYS PRESENT, AND OF SINS
OF IGNORANCE.

SIR,

• *Paris, Feb. 26, 1656.*

THERE are no people in the world like these Jesuits. I have seen Dominicans, doctors, and all sorts of persons; but such a visit as I have just paid I still needed, to supply my deficient information. Others are but copyists of these men. Things are best learnt at the fountain-head: I have seen one of the ablest among them; and I was accompanied by the same faithful Jansenist friend, who went with me to the Dominicans. Being particularly desirous of information respecting the differences between them and the Jansenists, upon what they denominate 'Actual Grace,'* I told this good Father that I should be greatly obliged to him to explain the matter to me; that I did not even know what the expression meant; and begged him to inform me. "Willingly," he replied, "I am fond of persons of an inquiring disposition. This is the definition. 'Actual grace' we call an inspiration of

* 'Grace actuelle' (Fr.)

the Deity, by which he acquaints us with his will, and by which, further, he excites in us the desire to fulfil it.” “And what,” said I, “is your difference with the Jansenists on this subject?” “It is this,” he replied; “we hold that God bestows actual grace on all men upon every occasion of temptation; since if we had not in every temptation actual grace to preserve us from sin, whatever sin was committed could not be imputed to us. The Jansenists, on the other hand, say that sins committed without actual grace are certainly imputed; but in this they are mere dreamers.” I perceived what he intended to say, but in order to make him express himself more clearly, I said, “This word ‘actual,’ father, perplexes me; I am not accustomed to it; have the goodness to state the point again, without using this term, and I shall be greatly obliged.” “Certainly,” replied the Father, “you wish to have the substance of the definition without technicalities; this can be done without any change of meaning; I shall be most happy. We maintain, then, as an incontestible principle, ‘that an action cannot be imputed as sin, if God do not give us, before its commission, the knowledge of its sinfulness, and an influence from himself, by which we are excited to avoid it.’ Do you understand me now?”

Astonished at this statement, according to which all sins of surprise, and all such as are committed in entire forgetfulness of God, are not to be imputed to us, I turned to my Jansenist companion, and saw plainly by his look that he admitted nothing of the kind. But, as he made no remark, I said to the Father, “I should be very glad if this were as you have stated, and could be

established by sound reasoning and proofs." "Say you so," he quickly rejoined; "I can furnish you with them at once, and those of the most unquestionable kind." On which he proceeded to search for his books.

In the meantime I remarked to my friend, "Are there any others, then, that hold the same language as this person?" "Is this so new to you?" he replied; "undoubtedly neither the Fathers, Popes, nor Councils,—neither the Scriptures, nor any pious works (even of latter times) have expressed such sentiments; but as to the casuists and scholastics of the present day, he will find you sufficient of these." "But," said I, "these are authorities that I repudiate; they are opposed to the Fathers." "Very true," he replied.

Upon this the good Father came back, loaded with books; and offering me one, said "Read this—the Catalogue of Sins, by Father Bauny—the 5th edition too. Does not that prove it to be a valuable work?" "It is unfortunate," said my Jansenist friend to me, in a low voice, "that this book was *condemned* at Rome, as well as by the bishops of France." "Look here," said the Father, "at page 906." I read, as he directed, and found what follows. 'In order to constitute sin, and to incur guilt in the sight of God, we must know that the act committed is evil, or at least doubt, or fear it to be so; or, believing the act meditated to be displeasing to God, and forbidden by him, yet, being notwithstanding bent upon its commission, we take the fatal course, and pass the boundary of obedience.'

"This begins well," said I. "See nevertheless," he rejoined, "what malice will do. This was what M. Hallier,

before he came over to us, taunted M. Bauny upon, and applied to him the words, '*Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi.*'" "It is certain," I replied, "that according to Father Bauny, this is a new species of redemption."

"And now will you have a higher authority still," added he. "Here is a work of Father Annat;* it is his book against M. Arnauld. Read the lines I have marked, at page 34: they are *golden* ones." I read accordingly as follows: 'He who has no thought of God, or of his sins; nor any apprehension, (that is, as I consider) no consciousness of his duty to exercise love to God, or penitence; he has no actual grace to direct his conduct; but it is also true that he commits no sin; and that if he is condemned it will not be as a punishment of such omission.' And a few lines further, 'The same may be said in regard to a culpable act also.'

"You see," said the Father, "how he here speaks of sins of omission, as well as of commission; for he leaves out nothing. What do you say to this?" "Oh, I am delighted," I replied; "the consequences must be admirable; I foresee them already: what mysteries open themselves to me! I predict that more people, beyond all comparison, will be justified by this ignorance, and this forgetfulness of God, than by grace and by the Sacraments. But, my good Father, may you not be affording me a false satisfaction? Is there not here something that resembles a 'sufficiency' that suffices not? I am terribly afraid of the '*distinguo*;' I have already been taken in by it. Pray be sincere." "How!" said the Father,

* Pere Annat, Confessor to the King. See 17th and subsequent Letters.

warmly ; " this is no matter for jesting ; we are not dealing in equivocation." " I am not jesting," I said, " my anxiety is proportionate to the interest I feel in the question."

" Look then," said he, " for fuller satisfaction at the writings of M. Le Moine, one of the highest authorities of the Sorbonne. He first learned his doctrine from us, indeed ; but he has treated the matter admirably, and established the point beyond dispute. He teaches, that to constitute the sinfulness of an action, all the following things must pass through the soul. Read, and ponder every word." I read accordingly in Latin, what here follows translated : ' 1. On the one part, God imparts to the soul a measure of love, which inclines it towards the thing commanded ; and, on the other, lust urges it to the contrary act. 2. God imparts to the soul a knowledge of its weakness. 3. God gives a knowledge of the medicine which heals spiritual diseases. 4. God inspires a desire of the cure. 5. God imparts the desire to pray, and to obtain his assistance.'

" And if all these things do not pass through the soul," added the Jesuit, " the act is not properly sinful, and cannot be imputed as such," as M. Le Moine states in another place, and throughout the whole of the remainder of the treatise.

" Do you wish for yet further authorities ? Here they are." (" But all of them modern," quietly whispered to me my Jansenist companion.) " I see it plainly," I said ; and then addressing the Father, observed, " My excellent Father, this will be good news for some people of my acquaintance ; for you never knew any persons who

commit less sin than they. They never think of God ; their vices have perverted their very reason. They have never been aware of their spiritual disease, or of the medicine that is to heal it. They have had no concern for their soul's welfare, and still less did they ever pray to God for assistance ; consequently they are, according to M. Le Moine, 'in their baptismal innocence.' They have had no thought of love to God, or penitence for sin ; therefore, according to Father Annat, 'they have committed no sin, through failure of love or penitence : ' their life has been passed in a constant pursuit of pleasure of every kind, uninterrupted by the slightest remorse or compunction. All these things have made me fear hitherto that their destruction was inevitable ; but you, my worthy Father, have shown me that these very excesses tend to assure their safety. Heaven bless you, my Father, for convincing me thus of their justification ! Other persons seek the cure of their souls by painful austerities, but you demonstrate that those, supposed to be the most dangerously sick, are in reality well. Oh happy prospect for them, both for this world and the next ! I had always believed that we sinned the more, the less God was in our thoughts ; but, from what I now learn, when once we have achieved the power to dismiss him altogether, all things become pure for ever after. No more half-sinners, who retain some little love for virtue ; your half-sinners may be all lost ; but, for your free and easy sinners—your hardened sinners—sinners without compunction—full and complete sinners—hell will never get hold of them ; they have cheated the devil by the very act of giving up themselves to him ! ”

The good Father, seeing clearly enough the connexion between these consequences and his own principle, eluded the difficulty with adroitness; and, without forgetting either his good-humour or his prudence, merely said, "Do not suppose we are unprepared to meet the unhappy cases you describe: know, we hold that if those reprobates of whom you speak had never experienced compunction, nor felt any desire to give themselves to God, they would have been without guilt. But we maintain that they have experienced all this; and God would never have left a man to his sin, without discovering first to him the evil of what he was about to do, and giving him a desire to avoid it, or at least to ask assistance to be enabled to do so; and it is only the Jansenists that affirm the contrary."

"What! Father," I rejoined, "is that then what constitutes the heresy of the Jansenists? To deny that every time sin is committed, the conscience is troubled; in spite of which, men yet take the leap, and pass the boundary of obedience, according to Pere Bauny? If this be all, it is certainly a peculiar kind of heresy! I supposed we were condemned for being destitute of good thoughts or notions; but, that we should be condemned for not believing all the world to be endued with them, did certainly never occur to me. But, my good Father, I feel bound in conscience to undeceive you; and to tell you, there are multitudes who are conscious of no such desires; who sin without compunction; who sin with satisfaction; who make sin a matter of boast and exultation. And who is better acquainted with these things than yourself? You have yourself probably confessed some of these very per-

sons ; for it is among people of distinction that they are most usually found. But take heed, my Father, of the dangerous consequences that flow from this principle of yours ! Do you not perceive the effect it will produce on libertines, whose great desire is to invalidate the truth of religion ? What an excuse do you not furnish them with, in laying down as an article of faith, that they must feel in every sin which they commit, a secret warning, and an internal desire to abstain from it ! Is it not obvious, that being convinced by their own experience of the fallacy of your doctrine upon this point, which you maintain to be one essential to faith, they will extend the consequences to every other. They will, if they find you not to be believed in one Article, suspect the whole ; and thus you will compel them to the conclusion, either that religion is false, or that you are ill-instructed in its doctrines.”

My colleague then, taking up my argument, said, “ You would do well, Reverend Father, while you endeavour to maintain this doctrine of yours, not to avow quite so plainly as you have now done, what you mean by ‘ actual grace.’ How could you openly declare, without losing altogether your hold upon mens’ minds, ‘ that none can be guilty of sin, without a previous knowledge of their infirmity, and of the remedy provided for it ; without a wish for its cure, and for receiving such cure at the hands of God ?’ Can you now, seriously and conscientiously, say that those who are immersed in avarice, in lust, in blasphemy, in broils and animosities, in robbery and sacrilege—that such have in reality any desire of chastity, of humility, and of other similar virtues ?

“Will any one believe that the philosophers who boasted so much of the powers of nature, knew any thing of disease and medicine? Will you tell me, that those who hold, as an undoubted axiom, ‘that it is not God who imparts virtue, and that no one was ever found to seek it of Him,’ would ever think of seeking it of Him themselves?”

“Who could suppose that the Epicureans, who deny a Divine Providence, were ever sensible of an impulse to pray to the Deity? They who declared ‘that it was an affront to God to solicit him in our necessities; as if He could be supposed capable of bestowing a thought upon such beings as ourselves.’

“And, finally, can it be imagined that idolaters and atheists, in all the temptations to which they are urged into sin—that is, in times and on occasions without number—have any desire to pray to the true God (with whom they are unacquainted) to bestow upon them virtues, of whose nature they knew nothing?”

“All this we do maintain,” replied the worthy Father, in a determined tone; “and sooner than admit that men sin without the consciousness of doing ill, and a desire of the opposite virtues, we declare that all persons, both the vicious and the unbelieving, experience such influences and desires on every occasion of temptation; for you can furnish me with no proof, especially from Scripture, to the contrary.”

I then resumed the discourse as follows: “What! my Father, must we have recourse to Scripture to demonstrate a matter so palpable? This is no point of faith, or even

of reasoning ; it is a question of fact : it is matter of sight, of knowledge, of feeling.”

The Jansenist, however, holding the Father to his own terms, thus continued, “ If you are desirous, Reverend Sir, to appeal only to Scripture, I consent ; but take care how you resist its authority : and since it is written, ‘ God has not revealed his judgments to the Gentiles, and has left them to wander in their ways,’ say not that God has enlightened those who, the sacred writings assure us, ‘ are abandoned to darkness and the shadow of death.’ ”

“ Is it not sufficient, to prove the error of your principle, that St. Paul calls himself ‘ the chief of sinners ;’ on account of sin which, he says, was committed in ignorance, and excess of zeal ? Is it not enough to find in the Gospel, that those who crucified the Lord Jesus, needed the pardon that he himself sought for them, although they knew not the evil of their doing, and would not have done it had they known it ? Is it not enough that Christ warns us, that there will be persecutors in the Church, who will think they do service to God in compassing its ruin ; in order to teach us, that this which, according to the Apostle, is the greatest of all sins, may have been committed by those who, so far from knowing it to be sin, believed they should sin in not committing it ? And, lastly, is it not enough that Christ himself has taught us, that there are two kinds of sinners,—the one, those who sin with knowledge, and the other, in ignorance ; and that both shall be punished, although in different measures ? ”

The worthy Father, finding himself somewhat pressed by these proofs from Scripture, began to lose ground in the discussion ; and allowing that the vicious might sin

without the inspirations and impulses in question, said, "You will not, at least, deny that the just never commit sin unless God ordain—" "You waver," said I, interrupting him, "You waver, Father; you abandon the general principle, and finding you can make nothing more of your case respecting sinners, you try to compromise the matter, and establish your point in regard to the just. But now its application will be much circumscribed; for it will avail so few persons, that it is not, so to speak, worth the trouble any longer to contest it."

But my companion, who might, as it appeared to me, have studied for the discussion that very morning, so prepared did he seem upon all points, continued thus: "This, my Father, is the last entrenchment, in which all those of your side of the question take refuge. But you are, in reality, no safer than before, even there. The instance of the just is not more favourable to you than that of the wicked. Who can doubt that the righteous often fall into sin through surprise and inadvertence? Do we not know that the saints themselves are led into snares by their concupiscence; and with all their habitual sobriety, yield themselves sometimes up to pleasure, while they believe they are under the constraint of necessity; as says St. Augustine himself in his Confessions?"

"How often do we see the most zealous persons drawn into acrimony in dispute from personal feelings, without reproof from conscience, and in the belief that they were actuated by zeal for truth alone; and remain insensible, till long after, of their error and self-deception!"

"But what shall be said of those who abandon themselves to conduct positively evil, while they believe it to

be meritorious (instances of which, ecclesiastical history furnishes us in abundance;) but which belief, according to the Fathers, affords them no justification of their offences.

“ And, independent of this, how many are the secret sins of the righteous! How otherwise could it be said that God alone knows their magnitude and their number; that no one can be certain whether he is deserving of the Divine love or displeasure,* and that the very holiest have cause of fear and solicitude, although they may not be conscious of transgression in any particular instance, as St. Paul says of himself?

“ Do you not see then, my Father, that the cases both of the just and of sinners alike oppose this necessity, in order to constitute sin, of knowing what is evil, and of loving the contrary virtues? The propensity of the vicious for sin clearly proves that they have no desire of virtue; and the love of the just to virtue equally shows that they have not always a consciousness of the sins which they daily fall into; as the Scripture testifies.

“ And so certain is it that the offences of the just are of this nature, that it is seldom that the holiest men commit sin in any other way. For how can it be believed, that souls so pure as to shrink with the most sensitive anxiety from every thing in the slightest degree displeasing to God, as soon as it is known to be so; and

* Had the holy-minded Pascal been permitted to live till his Christian experience had acquired more maturity, without loss of its fervour, he would, it may be hoped, have attained to more cheering views on this subject. There is a measure of humble assurance, without presumption, to be obtained even in this life; and the Apostle Paul himself, to whom Pascal often refers, affords numerous instances of it in his own experience. (Transl.)

who yet offend many times in every day of their existence—that they, on every occasion of offence, should have this consciousness of weakness, this knowledge of the remedy, this desire of restoration, and this dependence on God for assistance ; and that, notwithstanding these their desires and aspirations, persons so zealous and watchful should not be preserved from passing the boundary, and committing sin ?

“ Be assured then, my good Father, that neither sinners nor righteous men are always, and on all occasions, conscious of these convictions, desires, and aspirations, whenever they fall into sin ; that is, to use your own expressions—that they are not endued with ‘ actual grace,’ when they offend. Tell us no more, as do these new authorities, that it is impossible to sin without the knowledge of righteousness ; but rather say, with St. Augustine and the old Fathers, that it is impossible not to sin, when we know not what is right ; ‘ *Necesse est ut peccat, a quo ignorantur justitiæ.*’ ”

The good Father seeing his views thus controverted in regard to the just as well as to the sinful, was still determined to keep his ground ; and after a little consideration : “ I see now the way to convince you,” he cried. And again opening Father Bauny at the place he had quoted before, “ See, see the reasoning on which his position is founded. I well knew he would not be found deficient in proofs. Read what he quotes from Aristotle, and you will see that, when he produces so signal an authority, you must either burn the books of this Prince of philosophers, or come over to our opinion. Observe now the principles laid down by Father Bauny. He says

first, 'An action is not blameable, if it be involuntary.' "Agreed," said my friend. "This is the first time," said I, addressing both, "that I have found you agree. Stay where you are, my good Father, if you will take my advice." "That would be doing nothing," he replied, "for we must know what are the conditions of an action being voluntary." "I much fear," I rejoined, "that you will entangle yourself there." "Never fear," said he: "one thing I am sure of—Aristotle is on my side. Hear, now, what Father Bauny says; 'That an action may be proved to be voluntary, it should be committed by a person capable of seeing, knowing, penetrating the good and the evil in it. '*Voluntarium est,*' it is usually said, according to the philosopher ('*Aristotle*, remember,' said he, touching my hand) *quod fit a principio cognoscente singula, in quibus est actio*; so that when the will, at random and without deliberation, is impelled to desire or dislike, to do or to omit any thing, before it is apprehended whether it be evil to desire or to shun, to do or to omit it, such action is neither good nor evil; inasmuch as, until this pre-requisite is fulfilled—this scrutiny and consideration in the mind of the good or evil qualities of the action contemplated—such action is not to be considered as voluntary."

"Well," said the Father, "are you satisfied?" "It certainly appears," I replied, "that Aristotle is of the same opinion as Father Bauny, but that does not surprise me the less. So! my Father, it is not sufficient to constitute a voluntary action, that we are aware what we are doing, and that we do it because we intend to do it? But it is also necessary that we 'should see, should know,

should penetrate the good and the evil in an action? If this be so, no action in life can be voluntary; for no one can think at once and altogether of all these things. How many oaths are uttered in our games—what excesses are committed in festivities—what riots during *carnival* seasons, which are not voluntary, and consequently neither good nor bad, if they must be accompanied by this scrutiny of the mind upon the good or bad quality of the action committed! But is it possible, my Father, that Aristotle should have entertained such an idea as this—for I have heard he was considered an exact thinker?” “I will explain the matter,” said my Jansenist friend. And requesting the Father to give him Aristotle’s ‘Morals,’ he opened it at the commencement of the third book, from which the Father had taken the passage he had quoted, and said to him, “I forgive you for having supposed, on the authority of Father Bauny, that Aristotle had delivered such sentiments. You would have altered your opinion had you looked for yourself. It is perfectly true that he teaches, that ‘for an action to be voluntary, we must be acquainted with the particulars of that action, *Singula in quibus est actio.*’ But what does he mean by this, but that we must know the particular circumstances of such an action; as the examples he gives clearly prove? You will find he adduces only, in proof of his position, instances in which some such circumstances have been unknown; such as, ‘a person, intending to ascend a machine, detaches a missile which wounds another; or Merope, who killed his son, supposing him to be an enemy; and the like.’

“You thus see what kind of ignorance it is that renders

actions involuntary ; and that it is only that of special circumstance, which is styled by theologians, as you well know, ‘ignorance of fact.’* But it is ‘ignorance of intention,’† that is, unconsciousness of the good or evil of an action, which alone is the present question ;—let us see whether Aristotle is of the same opinion as Father Bauny. These are the words of that philosopher. “All wicked persons are ignorant as to what they should do, and what they should avoid ; and this it is which *constitutes* them wicked and vicious. We therefore cannot say that, because a man does not clearly know what he is in duty bound to do, that his actions are involuntary. For this ignorance in choosing between good and evil, does not show his act to be involuntary, but only to be vicious. We may say the same of one who is in general ignorant of the rules of duty, since it is that very ignorance which makes him an object of blame, not of excuse. And thus, the ignorance which constitutes actions to be involuntary and venial, is alone that which regards some particular fact, and special circumstances : it is then that a man is excused and pardoned, and considered as having acted against his inclination.”

“And now, my good Father, will you say that Aristotle is of your opinion? Who must not be astonished to see that a pagan philosopher is more enlightened than your doctors, in a matter so important to morality, and to the welfare of the soul, as a knowledge of the distinction between actions voluntary and involuntary, and consequently of the condemnation or acquittal due to sin? Hope no-

* ‘Ignorance du fait.’ (Fr.)

† ‘Ignorance du droit.’ (Fr.)

thing more then, Father, from this 'Prince of Philosophers,' and rather let me urge you to oppose no longer that Prince of Theologians, who thus decides the point in his 1st Book of Retr. chap. 15. 'Those who sin through ignorance do not commit the act involuntarily, although they may not deliberately intend to offend. And thus a sin, even of ignorance, cannot be committed without the will of the offender, although it be a will to act, and not absolutely to sin; which, however, does not prevent the action from being sinful, inasmuch as, to constitute sin, it is sufficient to have done that which we were under an obligation not to do.' "

The Father seemed surprised, and still more at the passage from Aristotle, than at that from St. Augustine. But as he appeared to be revolving what reply to make, it was announced that Madame La Maréchale de ——— and Madame La Marquise de ——— wished to see him. Therefore, hastily leaving us, "I will mention the matter," said he, "to our Fathers; they will be able to answer you. These are delicate questions." We understood him; and when I was alone with my friend, I expressed my astonishment at the tendency of these doctrines to the subversion of morality. He replied, that he was astonished at my astonishment. "Can you be ignorant," said he, "that their obliquities are more flagrant in cases of morality than even in other matters?" He proceeded to give me some striking instances; and postponed their continuation till a future period. I propose that what I learnt from him shall be the subject of further communications from, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

DESIGN OF THE JESUITS IN THE INSTITUTION OF A NEW MORAL CODE. TWO SORTS OF CASUISTS AMONG THEM; MANY LAX, BUT A FEW SEVERE; THE REASON OF THE DIFFERENCE. EXPLANATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF 'PROBABILITY.' A MULTITUDE OF MODERN AND OBSCURE AUTHORS SUBSTITUTED FOR THE FATHERS.

SIR,

Paris, March 20, 1656.

I AM about to fulfil my promise, and to furnish you with some of the leading principles of morality of the Jesuit Fathers:—"These men, eminent in learning and in wisdom, guided by a wisdom from above, which is more infallible than all the rules of philosophy." You may suppose I am jesting in using such expressions; I am quite serious; they are their own words, in their work entitled "*Imago primi sæculi*." I am only transcribing from them, and from the close of their Eulogium. "This is the society of men, or rather of angels, predicted by Isaiah in these words: 'Go, ye angels prompt and swift of wing.'" Is not the prophecy, as applicable to them, clear? "They are eagle-spirits; they are a flock of phoenixes (a certain author having lately demonstrated

that those birds are *numerous*): they have changed the face of Christianity." Since they assert all this, we are bound to believe them. And all this, I proceed to show you in the following communication; as well as to put you in possession of their maxims for the conduct of life and conversation.

I made up my mind to inform myself thoroughly upon these matters. I determined not to rely solely upon the information of my friend; but to see with my own eyes. I found, however, that he had told me nothing but what was strictly accurate; and I think you will see this to be the case, from the account I am about to give of our conferences.

In my various conversations with him, he related to me such extraordinary things, that I had at first great difficulty in believing them. He however confirmed his statements by the publications of these very Fathers; so that I had no way left to excuse them, but to suggest that the sentiments in question were only those of individuals, and that it was not fair to impute them to the society at large. And, in fact, I contended that I was acquainted with some among them who were as strict, as others whom he referred to were lax. Upon this he proceeded to disclose to me the spirit upon which the Society's proceedings are founded; and this being by no means generally known, you will probably be interested in learning. The following is his statement.

"You suppose it to be much in their favour to be able to show, that there are among these professors some whose sentiments are as evangelical, as those of others are the contrary; and you thence come to the conclusion, that

these latitudinarian opinions are not chargeable upon the whole body. I well know all this; for if such were the case, they would not be able to tolerate those who are so opposed to them. But since they have among them a portion who hold these licentious doctrines, you must in the same way conclude, that the spirit of the Society is by no means rigid; otherwise it would not allow such an intermixture as that which actually exists." "How!" I inquired, "what then is to be deemed their object and aim as a body? It must be, surely, that they shall be bound by no fixed principles, and that each shall have liberty to think and speak as he pleases." "That never could be the case," replied my friend;—"so large a body could never be formed upon a plan so desultory, nor exist without a governing spirit to regulate all its movements: to say nothing of one of their special rules, viz. that *nothing should go forth to the world respecting their doctrines and principles, without the sanction of their superiors.*" "But then," I said, "how is it possible that these very superiors can give their sanction to such contradictory maxims?" "That is what I propose to explain to you," he replied.

"Understand then, in the first place, that their object is by no means the corruption of morals. On the other hand, they are equally remote from entertaining a single-minded aim for their reformation: this they would hold to be impolitic. Their reasoning is as follows: They think so favourably of themselves, that they believe it to be useful and—so to speak—necessary for the interests of religion, that their reputation should stand high with all classes, and their sway be extended over every man's con-

science. And as they see that severe and evangelical principles are most influential over some persons, they avail themselves of such, where they judge their opportunity favourable. But knowing these principles to be not favoured by the great majority, their method is to relax them in favour of these latter; and, thus, they are able to meet the tastes of all. For these reasons—having to deal with such varieties of condition, and even with entire nations—differing so much from each other—it is found necessary to have casuists adapted to all these diversities.

“On this principle you will easily see, that if they employed only teachers of relaxed principles, they would frustrate their great aim of getting all classes under their influence; as the severely pious seek for guides of severe views in their spiritual affairs. But as that class is not a numerous one, it does not require a *large* body of instructors: on the other hand, crowds of the more easy sort of teachers take the field, for the service of the multitudes that are more loosely inclined.

“It is by this kind of ‘*facile and accommodating conduct*’ (as it is called by the Père Petau) that they hold out the hand of fellowship to the whole world. If, for instance, one person presents himself who is desirous to make restitution of some ill-gotten gains, think not that they will repulse him; they will applaud, and confirm him in so holy a resolution. But if, on the contrary, another is desirous of absolution of his sin without restitution, it will go hard with them if they do not find means for accomplishing his object; and they will become themselves guarantees for their efficacy.

“By these methods they preserve their friends, and are protected from their enemies; for, if reproached with laxity of principles, they straightway bring forward their austere professors; together with, perhaps, some of their publications, that enforce the rigour of Christian principles; and the simple and unreflecting are satisfied with such proofs.

“In this way they adapt themselves to all classes. Nay, they respond so admirably to every taste, that, in countries where the notion of a crucified Deity is esteemed folly, they suppress the scandal of the Cross; preaching only the Saviour in his state of glory, and not of suffering. It is in this manner that they have acted in the Indus and China, permitting their converts even to practice idolatry, by the subtle contrivance of directing them to *conceal* an image of Christ under their garments, and mentally to render to it those public devotions, which were professedly paid to the idol Cachinchoam, and their Keum-fu-cum. These are facts, which rest on the authority of Gravina, a Dominican, as also of the Spanish memorial presented to Philip 4th of Spain by the Grey Friars of the Philippine Isles, as related by Thomas Rastado in his work of ‘The Martyrs of the Faith,’ page 427. In the same manner, the congregation of the Cardinals ‘de Propaganda fide’ was obliged to interdict the Jesuits, specially, and on pain of excommunication, from permitting the adoration of idols on any pretence whatever, as well as from concealing the doctrines of the Cross from their students in theology; expressly directing them to admit none to baptism, but on a full explanation of those holy mysteries; and ordering them to exhibit crucifixes in all their churches; as is fully

set forth in the decree of that congregation, of July 1646, signed by Cardinal Carponi.

“It is in this way, and by virtue of the doctrine of “*prôbable opinions*,”* the source and the foundation of every species of disorder, that they have spread themselves over the face of the whole earth. You may hear the same things from themselves; for they affect no concealment of them; nor of various other facts with which I am about to acquaint you; with this difference only, that their prudence (which is in reality worldly and political) is masked under the pretext of a prudence divine and spiritual; as if true faith, and the tradition by which it is supported, were not one and unchangeable, in all times, and all places; as if it were allowable to bend its requisitions, to accommodate those who ought to conform themselves to its obligations; and as if the soul, in order to cleanse itself from its pollutions, might dare to corrupt the Law of the Lord; whereas we know, that ‘the Law of the Lord is pure, converting the soul, and making wise the simple!’

“I should wish you then to make the acquaintance of these worthy Fathers; and take my word for it, you will easily perceive, in the laxity of their morals, the results of their doctrines respecting grace. You will find in them the Christian virtues almost extinct, and stripped altogether of that grace of charity, which is their soul and life. You will see so many crimes palliated, and so much irregularity allowed, that you will be no longer surprised to find them maintain, all men to have grace sufficient

* ‘*Opinions probables.*’ (Fr.)

for such a measure of piety of life, as their principles propose. For a morality such as theirs—little better than Pagan—the light that Nature supplies is indeed enough. When *we* inculcate the necessity of an efficacious grace, we assign other virtues for its exercise. It is not simply, to eradicate some kinds of vices by the cultivation of others; it is not merely, to induce an observance of the external duties of religion; it is to nourish a virtue more elevated than the Jewish Pharisees, or the wisest of Pagans ever reached. The restraints of law—the deductions of reason—suffice for attainments such as *those*. But, to disengage the soul from love of the world, and allure it from all that it holds most dear below; to annihilate self, and consecrate the affections solely and unchangeably to God; all this can be the work alone of an Omnipotent hand! And it is, therefore, as little rational to pretend that we have in *ourselves* this sufficiency of power, as it would be to deny that such qualities as have been described, if destitute of Divine love, which, notwithstanding, these Fathers confound with Christian virtues, are not within our own power of attainment.”

It was thus my friend discoursed to me, evincing a deep concern for the irregularities he described. For my part, I could not help at least admiring the excellent policy of this society; and I determined to follow the advice I had received, to resort to one of their most able casuists for further information. For this purpose I found out an old friend of my own, and proceeded to renew my acquaintance with him. And as I was aware in what way to obtain most effectually my object, we soon came to an excellent understanding.

He received me with great cordiality, for he had always been attached to me; and after some general conversation, I took occasion, in reference to the present season, to ask him a few questions respecting fasting, with a view to draw him insensibly into the subjects I desired. I complained that I experienced difficulty in enduring that exercise.

He began by exhorting me to the duty of forcing my inclinations; but, as I continued my complaints, he expressed concern for my case, and set himself to find excuses for me. He suggested several causes of the inconvenience I suffered, which, however, did not apply to my own circumstances. At last it occurred to him to ask me whether I found any difficulty in sleeping without taking supper. "Indeed I do, my Father," I replied, "and for that reason I am often obliged both to take a collation at noon, and to sup in the evening." "I am glad to say I can find a way," he replied, "to relieve you, without any sin on your part. There—you may dispense with fasting. I do not, however, wish you to take my word only for it; come into the library." I went accordingly, and there, taking up a book, he said, "Here is my authority; and heaven knows how eminent an one it is. It is *Escobar*." "Who is *Escobar*?" I enquired. "What! don't you know *Escobar*, a member of our society, who compiled that Moral Theology of 24 of our Fathers; respecting which he makes, in the Preface, an allegorical comparison to the Apocalypse, sealed with seven seals? And further he says, that Jesus thus offers it sealed to the four living creatures, Suarez, Vasquez, Molina, Valentia, in presence of 24 Jesuits, representing

the 24 Elders." He then read the whole of this Allegory, which he evidently considered very impressive, and conveying a striking proof of the excellence of the work. Then, finding the passage relating to fasts—"Here it is," said he, tr. 1, ex. 13, N. 67, 'If a person cannot sleep without having eaten, is he obliged to fast? By no means.' Are you not satisfied?" "Not entirely," I replied, "for I find I can bear fasting, by taking a collation in the morning, and supping at night." "See what follows then," he said; "they have provided for all cases. 'And suppose a person finds himself enabled to fast by taking only a collation in the morning, and supper at night?' Here is the answer; 'Still he is not bound to fast; no one is obliged to reverse the order of his meals.'" "Excellent reasoning!" I exclaimed. "But tell me," he continued; "Do you take much wine?" "No," I answered; "I cannot bear much." "I asked the question," said he, "for the purpose of apprizing you, that you may lawfully drink wine in the morning, and whenever you please, without violating your fast; and that is very supporting to the strength. This is decided in the same part, No. 75. 'May we, without breaking our fast, drink wine at any hour we choose, and even in large quantities? We may, and even of *hypocras*.'"* "I don't remember that *hypocras* wine," said I; "I must put it down in my memoranda. But really this Escobar is an excellent person." "Every one likes him," replied the Father; "he puts such striking queries. Look here, in the same place, No. 38; 'If a person is doubtful whether he has reached 21, is he bound to fast? No. But

* Probably something more comforting than ordinary wine.

supposing I shall be 21 to-night, an hour after midnight, and to-morrow is fast-day, shall I be bound to fast to-morrow? No; you may eat as much as you like between midnight and one o'clock, as you are not 21 till then; and thus, as you have a right to break the fast, you are not bound to keep it." "It is really very entertaining," said I. "Oh, there's no leaving it off when you have once begun to read it: I pass days and nights over it—I read nothing else." The worthy Father, in fact, seeing how it interested me, was delighted, and went on. "Look at this passage of Filiutius, one of the 24 Jesuits, vol. ii. tr. 29, part ii. c. 6, N. 143; 'If a person is exhausted, as, for instance, *ad insequendam amicam*,' is he bound to fast? No. But if he has fatigued himself, expressly for the purpose of obtaining a dispensation from fasting, will he still be bound to fast? Though he may have formed a purpose of doing so, he will be under no such obligation.' There," said he, "now you would not have believed this!" "Indeed, my good Father," said I, "I do not believe it now. What! is it no sin not to fast when we are able to do so? Is it lawful for us to seek occasions to commit sin? or rather are we not bound to avoid them? Truly, this is a very accommodating doctrine." "Not always," he replied; "it depends upon circumstances." "On what circumstances?" "Oh, oh!" he rejoined; "then it is your opinion, that if we are exposed to inconvenience in avoiding such occasions, still we are bound to do so? That is not, I assure you, the opinion of Father Bauny, as you will see here at page 1084, 'Absolution is not to be refused to those who continue in a 'proximate' con-

dition of sin,* if it be such as they are unable to withdraw from, without bringing scandal upon themselves;† or without sustaining personal inconvenience.’” “I am delighted to hear it, my good Father; there is nothing more wanting, but to say, these occasions may be purposely and deliberately sought, since it is allowable not to avoid them.” “That very thing is in some cases allowed,” rejoined he; “the celebrated casuist Basil Ponce, states this, and the Père Bauny confirms his opinion in his tract on Penitence, ix. 4, p. 94: ‘We may seek occasions, directly, and of themselves, *‘primo et per se,’* if the spiritual or temporal good of ourselves or our neighbour induce us to do so.’”

“In truth,” I exclaimed, “I seem in a dream when I find religious persons holding language like this? My good Father, tell me now, can you conscientiously maintain such opinions?” “No, indeed I do not,” he replied. “Then you are speaking contrary to your conscience?” “By no means; I say this, not according to my own conscience, but according to the consciences of Ponce, and Père Bauny; and surely we may follow such eminent men as these.” “What then, my Father, because they have introduced a few such lines as these into their books, can you in your conscience believe it is lawful to seek occasions of sin? I always thought that Scripture and the traditions of the Church were to be guides, and not vain casuists.” Oh! bon Dieu!” cried the Father, “this is just like the Jansenists. Does not the authority of such men as Père Bauny and Basil Ponce, give a mea-

* ‘Dans les occasions prochaines du péché.’ (Fr.)

† ‘Sans donner sujet au monde de parler.’

sure of probability at least to these opinions?" "I cannot be satisfied with probability," I replied; "I want certainty." "I see," said the Father, "you don't understand this doctrine of 'probable opinions;'* you would think differently, if you did: I must instruct you in it. You will find you have not lost your time in coming here; but for that, you would have known nothing about it. It is the very foundation—the A, B, C of our system of morality."

I was delighted to find him thus fall into the topic I desired; and eagerly expressed my wish that he would explain to me the meaning of a 'probable opinion.' "Our writers will furnish you with an answer better than myself," he replied. "This is what they lay down generally on the subject; and among others, our Twenty-four, in *Princ. ex 3, N. 8*. An opinion is termed 'probable,' when it is founded upon reasons entitled to a certain measure of consideration. Thence it may happen, that a single authority of eminence may render an opinion 'probable.'" "And this is the reason." . . . "A person, specially devoted to the study of a given subject, would not embrace an opinion, if he had not good and sufficient cause for it." "Then," said I, "a single doctor may turn our consciences, at his own pleasure, and without fear of consequences!" "You need not laugh," said he; "this is a doctrine not to be questioned. The Jansenists have tried to shake it, but they have lost their labour. It is too firmly established. Hear what Sanchez, one of our most celebrated Fathers, says, 'You will doubt, per-

* 'Des opinions probables.' (Fr.)

haps, how the authority of one sound and learned doctor should render an opinion probable; nevertheless, such is the case, as we are assured by Angelus, Sylv. Navarre, Emmanuel Sa, &c. And they prove it thus. A probable opinion is one that has weight and foundation. Now the authority of a wise and pious man is not a trifle, but rather a matter of great consideration. And weigh well the reason. If the testimony of any individual be credible, as to a certain event having occurred at such a place—for instance, Rome—why may not such testimony be equally valid in a question of morals?”

“A happy comparison,” I exclaimed, “mere worldly matters with those relating to the conscience!” “Have patience: Sanchez has an answer for this in the lines that immediately follow; ‘And I do not agree with the distinction which certain authors draw, that the authority of any learned man may weigh in a matter of a worldly nature, but not in those relating to Divine things; for it is of great weight, both in the one and the other.’”

“My good Father,” said I, frankly, “I cannot make anything of this rule of yours. Who will satisfy me that, with this licence which your Fathers assume, of examining matters by reason only, that which will appear certain to one, will be so to others? So great is the diversity of opinion.” “You don’t see the point,” interrupted the Father; “they are by no means without differences of opinion; but that is of no importance. We all know that they do not all hold the same sentiments; on the contrary, they scarcely ever agree: but it is all the better for that. There are few questions in which you will not find that one will say, Yes; another, No. And, in all these cases,

each of the two conflicting opinions has some degree of probability; and therefore it is, that 'Diana' remarks on this subject, Part III. Vol. IV. p. 244, 'Ponce and Sanchez hold different opinions; but, as they are both wise men, each of their opinions rests upon grounds of probability.'

"But, my Father," I said, "this must render a choice between the different views embarrassing." "Not in the least," he replied; "we have nothing to do but to follow that which agrees best with *our own*." "But suppose the other has the greater measure of probability?" "No matter," he replied. "And if the other should be the more sound?" "No matter still," rejoined the Father; "here is an excellent solution of the point. It is in Emanuel Sa, a member of our society, in his Aphorisms 'de Dubio,' p. 183, 'We may do any thing that we believe to be allowable, if authorized by an opinion grounded on probability; although the contrary opinion may be the more sound one. The opinion of any *one* learned man suffices for this purpose.'" "Then if an opinion be altogether less probable, and less sound, is it allowed to act upon that, in preference to one which is believed to be more probable, and more sound?" "Yes," again he said; "hear the words of Filiutius, the great Roman Jesuit, Mort. quæst. tr. 21, c. 4, N. 128, 'It is lawful to follow a less probable, and less sound opinion; many authors concur in this judgment.' Is not this explicit?" "This gives us sufficient latitude, it must be confessed, my reverend Father," I said: "thanks to your 'probable' opinions, we get a very comfortable degree of liberty of conscience. And pray, do your other casuists

give the same licence in their replies?" "Yes," said he, "we reply just according to our own pleasure, or rather according to the pleasure of those who interrogate us; for these are but rules, taken from the works of the Fathers, Layman, Theol. Mor. l. 6, tr. 1, c. 2, § 2, N. 7—Vasquez, Dist. 62, c. ix, n. 47; Sanchez in Sam. l. 1, c. ix. N. 28; and of our '24' in Princ. ex. 3, N. 24. These are the words of Layman, which are followed by the '24;' A doctor, when consulted, may give such advice as is not only, in his opinion, probable, but even contrary to his opinion, if it be thought probable by others, provided such contrary opinion will be more favourably received by, and be more agreeable to the party asking advice; '*si fortè, ex illi favorabilios seu exoptatior sit.*' But I go further, and say, it will not be unreasonable for him to give to the consuler an opinion that may have been entertained as probable by some learned persons, although he himself may believe it to be utterly false.'"

"Admirable! my good Father, your doctrine is most convenient. So, you may reply Yes or No, at your pleasure! It is impossible to estimate too highly such an advantage. I now see the use of the opposing opinions held by your authorities on all subjects; for the one are always serviceable, and the other can never be injurious. If you don't find your account on the one side, you try the other, and are thus always secure." "It is very true," he replied; "and thus we can always say, with Diana, who had Father Bauny on his side, while Father Lugo was against him,

'Sæpe, premente Deo, fert Deus alter opem.'

'Si quelque Dieu nous presse, un autre nous delivre.'

"I understand you," said I; "but there is one difficulty, to my mind; suppose, after consulting one of your doctors, and receiving from him a somewhat latitudinarian opinion, you were to fall in with another more severe in his views, and who would not give absolution without a change of opinion? Have you not given directions for such a contingency?" "Can you doubt it?" he replied; "they are *compelled* to absolve such penitents as hold the probable opinions in question, on pain of being held guilty of mortal sin if they refuse. This has been clearly proved by our writers, and among others Père Bauny, tr. 4, de pœnit. qu. 13, p. 19. 'When the penitent,' he says, 'acts upon the authority of a probable opinion, the confessor must absolve him, even if his own opinion differ from that of the penitent.'" "But he does not say it is a mortal sin not to absolve him." "You are too hasty!" said he; "hear what follows: it is expressly laid down; 'To refuse absolution to a penitent for an act committed in pursuance of a probable opinion, is an offence, in its very nature, mortal.' And he quotes, in confirmation of this sentiment, three of the most eminent of our Fathers, Saurez, Vol. 4, dist. 32, sect. 5; Vasquez, disp. 62, ch. 7, et Sanchez, N. 29."

"Well, my good Father," I rejoined; "this is truly excellent! There is nothing now to fear. A confessor cannot dare to refuse! I did not know before that you had the power to issue ordinances on pain of damnation. I supposed you were only able to take away sins; I did not imagine you had authority to make them also: but I now see there is no limit to your powers." "You do not express yourself properly," he replied; "we do not make

sins ; we only furnish the occasion for bringing them to light. I have several times observed that you are not a good *scholastic*."

"Be that as it may, Father," I said, "my doubts are now all satisfied. But I have one more question to ask you. I do not exactly see how you manage, when the Fathers of the Church are opposed to the opinions of your Casuists?"

"You do not understand the matter," he replied. "The Fathers were well enough for their own times ; but they don't go far enough for ours. Modern morality is not to be regulated by them ; but by the casuists of our own day. Hear the words of our own Père Cellot, De Hier. lib. 8, cap. 16, p. 714, following, in this, the famous Père Reginaldus : 'In questions of morals the modern Casuists are preferable to the ancient Fathers, although they lived at a period nearer to the apostolic age.' And, in conformity with this view, Diana thus speaks, pa. 5, tr. 8, reg. 31 : 'Are the holders of benefices bound to give up their revenues, if they make an ill use of them?' The ancients said, Yes ; but the moderns say, No : let us then not relinquish this decision, by which the obligation to give up property in the supposed case is put an end to." "Admirable sentiments !" I replied, "and full of comfort for a large part of mankind." "As to the Fathers," said my friend again, "we leave them to such as incline to the dogmatic school ; but we who have the keeping of men's consciences, study them but little ; and quote, in our writings, none but the modern casuists. Look at Diana, for instance, whose works are so copious ; he has enumerated, at the outset, the authors whom he

refers to. They amount to 296, the oldest of their publications having appeared within the last eighty years." "Subsequent to the institution of your Society, then?" I said. "About contemporaneously," he replied. "That is to say," rejoined I, "on its appearance, at once were cashiered St. Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, and their brethren, as concerns every thing that relates to morals. But I should be glad to be informed the names of their successors: who, pray, are these new authorities?" "Oh, they are most able and distinguished men—Villalobos, Conink, Llamas, Achokeri, Dealkoser, Dellacroix, Veracruz, Ugolin, Tambourin, Fernandez, Martinez, Suarez, Henriquez, Vasquez, Lopez, Gomez, Sanchez, de Vechis, de Grassis, de Grassalis, de Peliginnis, de Graphocis, Squilante, Bezozeri, Barcola, de Bobadilla, Limancha, Perez de Lara, Aldretta Lorca, de Scarica, Quaranta, Scophra, Pedrezza, Cabrezza, Bisbo, Dias, de Clavasio, Villagat, Adam a Menden, Isibaine, Binsfield, Volfangi a Vorberg, Vosthery, Strevesdorf." "Oh, my good Father!" cried I, alarmed, "were all these people Christians?" "Christians!" said he, "did I not tell you they were the only persons by whom, in the present day, we regulate our system of Christianity?"

I was concerned to hear him say this; but made no remark; and only asked him if they were all Jesuits? "No," he replied; "but that is of no importance; there are excellent things in them all. Not but that, to say the truth, the greater part are taken or imitated from ourselves; but we do not stand upon punctilios; besides which, they never fail to quote our Fathers with eulogiums. Diana, for instance, who is not a member of our

Society, when he speaks of Vasquez, calls him the ‘Phoenix of Minds.’ And elsewhere he says, Vasquez, alone, is as valuable to him as all the rest together; ‘*Instar omnium.*’ All our writers also make great use of this worthy ‘Diana;’ as you will see, when you come to understand our doctrine of ‘Probability.’ On the contrary, we have wished that others besides the Jesuits should deal in ‘probable’ opinions, that we may not alone have such things imputed to us. And thus, when some author—whichever he may be—advances an opinion of this kind, we may, if we think proper, weigh it by the doctrine of ‘probability;’ at the same time that we are not answerable for it, if the writer does not belong to us.” “I understand all that,” I replied: “I see very well that every thing is made to suit your views completely—excepting only the old Fathers—and that you are masters of the field. Your course is clear.”

“At the same time,” I continued, “I cannot help thinking, I perceive a few important inconveniences, and some powerful obstacles in the way of your career.” “Indeed!” exclaimed the Father, astonished. “They are,” said I, “the *Scriptures*, the *Popes*, and the *Councils*; all which you cannot possibly gainsay, and which are all united in one uniform system of evangelical truth.” “Oh, is that all?” he replied. “You quite alarmed me. Do you suppose, so palpable a point as that has not been foreseen and provided for? I cannot indeed but admire that you should think, we have put ourselves in opposition to the *Scriptures*, the *Popes*, and the *Councils*! I must set you right. I should be concerned that you should suppose us so wanting in our duty. You have no doubt

conceived this notion from certain sentiments of our Fathers, which bear an appearance of such a contradiction, but are not such in reality. However, in order to satisfy you of our agreement with them, we must seek an opportunity of more leisure. If your stay here is not disagreeable, and you will let us meet again to-morrow, I will give you the necessary information."

This was the conclusion of our conference, as it will be of my present communication—enough in all conscience, for one letter. I doubt not you will be willing to wait for the sequel, and in the mean time, remain, &c. &c.

LETTER VI.

VARIOUS ARTIFICES OF THE JESUITS FOR EVADING THE
AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES, THE COUNCILS, AND
THE POPES. CERTAIN CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR
DOCTRINE OF PROBABILITY. THEIR INDULGENCE IN
FAVOUR OF BENEFICIARIES, PRIESTS, MEMBERS OF
RELIGIOUS ORDERS, AND SERVANTS. HISTORY OF
JOHN D'ALBA.

SIR,

I INFORMED you at the close of my last letter, that my excellent Jesuit friend had promised to explain to me the manner in which their casuists had succeeded in reconciling their opinions with the decisions of the Popes and Councils, and with the canon of Scripture. On my next visit to him, he gave me the promised information; and it was to this effect.

“One of the methods,” said the worthy Father, “by which we reconcile these seeming contradictions, is, a certain interpretation of expressions. For instance, Pope Gregory 4th, pronounced that assassins ought not to receive an asylum in the churches, but should be expelled from them. Notwithstanding this, our four-and-twenty elders say, tr. 6, ex. 4, N. 27, ‘All persons who take life

treacherously, ought not to be subject to the penalty of this Bull.' Now this will appear contradictory ; but they manage the matter by an interpretation of the term Assassin, as follows : ' Are not assassins unfit for the privilege of sanctuary ? Yes, by the Bull of Gregory XIV. But we understand by the term Assassin, such as commit murder for pay. Whence it follows, that those who kill without pay, and only to do a service to a friend, should not be called assassins.' In the same way, it is said in the Gospel, ' Give alms of your abundance.' But many of the casuists have found a way to relieve the most opulent persons from the necessity of giving alms. You will think this again inconsistent. But it is easily explained by their interpretation of the word ' abundance ' as ' superfluity : ' so that in reality scarcely any one can be properly said to enjoy such a superfluity. And this is the view of Vasquez, in his Tract on Alms, c. 4, N. 14. ' Whatsoever amount of means persons, living in society, enjoy, for the purpose of maintaining a suitable condition for themselves and their relations, is not to be called ' superfluity ; ' and therefore, scarcely any person, so living in the world, can be said to have superfluity of wealth—not even Sovereigns themselves."

" Diana, also, after quoting these words of Vasquez (for he usually takes his views from our authorities), concludes in this sensible manner : ' As to the question whether the rich are bound to give alms of their superfluity, although the affirmative is perfectly just, it will never, or very rarely happen, that in practice the obligation is binding."

" I see clearly," my Father, " I said, " what is the doc-

trine of Vasquez ; but what answer would be given, if it were objected, that it would be as much for our souls' salvation, according to Vasquez, *not* to give alms, provided we had worldly ambition enough not to possess any superfluity ; as, according to the Gospel, it is safe to have no ambition, that by that means we may have a superfluity to dispense in alms-giving ? ” “ Why, you would say,” he replied, “ that both views were safe, and *that* according to the same evangelist ; the one, according to the Gospel in the more liberal and obvious sense ; the other, according to the interpretation given to it by Vasquez. You see now the advantage of interpretation.”

“ But when the terms are so clear,” he proceeded, “ as not to admit of any such diversity, we then avail ourselves of circumstances favourable to us ; as you will see by an example. The Popes have been accustomed to excommunicate monks who appear without their ecclesiastical dress ; notwithstanding which, our twenty-four elders thus express themselves, tr. 6, ex. 7, N. 103, ‘ What are the occasions on which a monk may leave off his dress without incurring excommunication ? ’ Several are stated, and, among others, these : ‘ If he take it off for the purpose of pilfering, or going “ incognito ” to places of licentious amusement, or for any other scandalous object, intending however soon to resume his dress.’ It is plain therefore that the Bulls did not contemplate cases of this description.”

I expressed some incredulity upon this point, and begged the Father to show me the passages in the original. I found that the chapter, containing these words, was entitled, “ Practices of the School of the Jesuits' Society ; ”

“ *Praxis ex Societatis Jesu Schola*; ” and there I read as follows : “ Si habitum demittat, ut *furetur occulto*, vel *fornicatur*.” He also showed me the same thing in Diana, as thus : “ ut *ëat incognitus ad lupanar*.” “ And how is it, my good Father,” I asked, “ that they are exempted from excommunication on such occasions as these ? ” “ Don’t you understand ? ” replied he. “ Can you not perceive what scandal it would occasion, if a monk were to be surprised in such a situation, wearing his ecclesiastical habit ? And have you not heard what reply was given to the first Bull ‘ *contra sollicitantes* ’ ? And in what way our twenty-four, also, in a chapter of the ‘ *Pratiques de l’Ecole, &c. &c.* ’ explains the Bull of Pius V. ‘ *Contra Clericos* ’ ? ” “ I cannot say I know any thing of the matter.” “ Then you don’t read ‘ *Escobar* ’ ? ” said he. “ I had not done so before *yesterday*,” I replied ; “ and then I found difficulty in meeting with a copy. I do not know how it happens, that *lately* every body seems to have been running after it.” “ What I mentioned,” said the Father, “ is in tr. 1, ex. 8, N. 102. Look at it for yourself. You will see an admirable specimen of the method of favourable interpretation of ‘ *Bulls*.’ ” I had seen it in fact that *very* evening ; but I *dare* not transcribe the passage even to you : it is absolutely *horrible* !

The worthy Father then resumed : “ You understand now how we manage to avail ourselves of ‘ favourable ’ circumstances ? * There are however certain matters so precise, that they cannot be met in the way of contradic-

* * ‘ *Circonstances favorables*. ’ (Fr.)

tion. For instance, three Popes have decreed, that monks who have bound themselves by vow to the observance of Lent,* cannot receive dispensation, even if appointed to bishoprics : nevertheless, Diana says, ‘ Notwithstanding that decision, they may obtain a dispensation.’ ” “ And how does he reconcile this ? ” I inquired. “ It is,” replied the Father, “ by the most subtle of all the modern methods, and by the most refined application of the doctrine of ‘ probability.’ I will explain it. The affirmative and negative of the greater number of opinions have, as I showed the other day, in the judgment of our doctors, a certain measure of probability, and sufficient to allow of their being followed with a safe conscience. Not that the affirmative and negative can be both true in the same sense — that is impossible : but, both being, in this manner, probable, both are safe.”

“ Upon this principle, our worthy colleague, Diana, thus writes, Part V. tr. xiii. v. 39 : ‘ To the decision of the three Popes, which is quite opposed to my own opinion, I reply, they have expressed themselves in this way, in addressing themselves to the affirmative of the proposition, which has, even in my judgment, a certain measure of probability. But it does not follow that the negative may not possess some probability likewise.’ And in the same treatise, § 65, on another subject, in which he also holds a different opinion to that of the Pope, he thus writes : ‘ The Pope, I grant, has said this as Head of the Church ; but, in doing so, he only gives a greater extension to the sphere of probability of his opinion.’ Now

* ‘ A la vie quadragesimalc.’ (Fr.)

you will see that he does not take this method, in order to invalidate the sentiments of the Popes. Such a course would not be endured at Rome, where Diana is held in high esteem; for he does not affirm that what the Popes have pronounced has not a high degree of probability: but, while allowing to their opinion the largest measure of probability, he merely asserts that the contrary is entitled to some measure of probability also." "That is extremely respectful," I said. "And it is more delicate," he rejoined, "than the reply of 'Père Bauny' when his writings were censured at Rome; for he was so unguarded as to say in his publication against M. Hallier, by whom he was at that time furiously persecuted, 'What is there in common between the censure of Rome and that of France?' You see plainly from all this, that, what with the interpretation given to terms, what with the favour of circumstances, and what, finally, with the double probabilities for and against a proposition, we succeed in reconciling these apparent contradictions, which occasioned you so much difficulty; and that, without violating the authority of Holy Scripture, the Councils, or the Popes, as I have now proved to you."

"My worthy Father," said I, "the world is too happy to have you for its guides! How valuable are these probabilities! I was not aware before, why you took so much pains to maintain that a single doctor—provided he were a learned* one—could give a 'probable' opinion; and that one opposed to him might do the same: and that we are at liberty to choose the one that agrees most

* 'Grave.' (Fr.)

nearly with our own, although we may not be satisfied that it is the one nearest to the truth. And all this with so safe a conscience, that a Confessor who should refuse absolution on the authority of these casuists would suffer the penalty of damnation. I can now readily conclude, that a single casuist may at his pleasure establish new rules of morality, and regulate, according to his own fancy, the whole course of men's conduct."

"What you state," rejoined the Father, "requires some *qualification*. This is a point you ought to understand. I will explain farther to you our method, and you will then see the progress of a new opinion, from its birth to its maturity, and final establishment."

"In the first instance, the learned doctor, who has invented it, promulgates it to the world—scattering it abroad, like seed, in the expectation of the harvest to come. It is at first feeble; but time will strengthen and ripen it by degrees; and, to this effect, Diana, who has been the introducer of many such dogmas, remarks in a certain passage: 'I advance this as my opinion; but as it is a novel one, I leave it to acquire maturity by time—*relinquo tempori maturandam*.'

"In this way it is seen, in the course of a few years, insensibly to acquire confirmation; and after a considerable lapse of time the proposition is found to be authorized by the tacit approbation of the Church, according to the celebrated maxim of the Père Bauny; 'If an opinion be advanced by several casuists, and the Church do not testify her disapprobation, it is to be held that she approves it.' And it is, in fact, on this principle, that he claims authority for one of his own opinions, in Tract 6, p. 312."

“What, then! my Father,” said I, “the Church, at this rate, must be believed to sanction all the abuses she silently endures, and to give currency to the errors contained in all the works which she does not publicly censure!” “You should dispute the point with Père Banny” he replied; “I am stating a fact, and you contest it as against myself individually. Facts, I repeat, should not be made matter of argument. What I was saying is, that when time has thus ripened an opinion, it is then rendered wholly probable and safe. Thus the learned Ceramæab, in his dedication to Diana of his ‘Fundamental Theology,’ says, that ‘the great Diana has rendered many opinions probable which were not so before’—‘*quæ ante non erant*,’ and, therefore, we now commit no sin in following them, although we might have done so before;—‘*jam non peccant licet ante peccaverint*.’”

“Truly, my good Father,” said I, “there are great advantages to be gained from these doctors of yours. Thus, two persons shall commit the same act; but one who is not acquainted with their doctrine shall sin—the other, who has the advantage of knowing it, shall be innocent! Is their system then uniformly thus edifying and indulgent? The law of God, according to St. Paul, establishes man’s sinfulness; the doctrines in question almost exonerate from sin. I must request further information upon these matters; I cannot leave you till you acquaint me thoroughly with the leading opinions and maxims which your casuists have established.”

“Ah!” replied the Father, “our chief aim, I assure you, *would* have been to establish no other rules but those of the Gospel in all their strictness; and it must be evi-

dent from the purity of our own conduct, that, if we have sanctioned any degree of laxity on the part of others, it is only from an unavoidable condescension to their weakness. We are compelled to it. Men are in these days so corrupt, that, being unable to raise them to our standard, we are obliged to lower the standard to them. But for this, they would forsake us; they would even do worse—they would abandon *themselves*. And so, in order to keep them with us, our casuists have considered those vices to which persons, in their several conditions, are the most addicted; with a view to establish such moderate regulations, (but without any violation of purity) that they must be fastidious indeed, not to be satisfied with them. The main rule of our Society, in order to promote the interests of Religion, is, to repel none, that none may be discouraged or despair.

“ With this view it is that we have laid down precepts for all sorts of persons; for patrons, for priests, for monks; for the gentry, for servants, for the rich; for those engaged in trade, for the embarrassed in circumstances, and the poor; for females under vows, for others at liberty; for the married and the single: in short, nothing has been overlooked and unprovided for.” “ That is,” said I, their foresight has extended to the clergy, the nobility, and the lower classes:—the interest I feel in your statements increases.”

“ We will begin then,” said the Father, “ with the case of patrons. You know what traffic takes place in the present day in church preferments; and, if we were to be guided by the ideas of St. Thomas and the ancient writers, we should discover many Simonists in the Church. For

this reason, our Fathers have found it necessary to temper these matters with prudence, as you will find from the words of Valentia, one of the four ‘*living creatures*’ of Escobar. They occur at the close of a long discourse, suggesting many expedients on this subject, among which I think the following is the best; it is in page 2039, 3d vol. ‘If a temporal consideration be given for a spiritual benefit—that is, money in exchange for a benefice—at a fixed price and valuation, it is palpable simony; but if it be given as the *motive*, which shall attract the good will of the patron to confer the preferment in question, then it is not simony; even though the money be the principal consideration with the presenter.’ Tanneras, another member of our society, says the same in his 3d vol. p. 1519, although he acknowledges ‘that St. Thomas is opposed to him, insomuch as he pronounces absolutely, that it is strictly simony to barter spiritual things for temporal, if the temporal be the consideration.’ It is in this way we exclude numberless cases of simony; for who would be so unhandsome as to refuse, in paying his money for a benefice, to assign such payment as a motive to induce the holder to relinquish it in his favour, instead of giving it as the mere price of the preferment? None could be so unprincipled, so abandoned in the sight of God!’” “I quite agree with you,” I replied; “every one would have virtue sufficient for the part you describe.” “Doubtless,” rejoined the Father.

“You now see how we soften matters in regard to patronage. As to ecclesiastics, we have a variety of precepts, and all very lenient towards them. For instance, this of the 24, tr. 1. ex. 11, N. 96. ‘If a priest have

received payment for saying a mass, may he receive a further payment for saying the same mass? Yes, says Filiutius, by applying that part of the sacrifice which appertains to himself, as priest, to him who pays him anew; provided, however, he does not receive as much as for an entire mass, but only for a part, say a third, of the mass.' "

" Truly, my good Father, this is one of those cases in which the 'pro' and 'con' are indeed both very probable; for what you are describing can scarcely fail to occur, after such authority as Filiutius and Escobar. But, leaving it for argument's sake, in the mere sphere of probability, it appears to me that the reverse of the case might be supposed, and on very sufficient grounds. While the church allows priests, whose circumstances are limited, to take payment for their masses, inasmuch as it is right that 'those who serve the altar should live of the altar,' she does not intend that they should make a mere barter of the sacrifice for money; and still less, that they should deprive themselves of all the grace which they ought to derive from the holy office. And I should further affirm, that priests, according to St. Paul, are to 'offer sacrifices, first for themselves, and next for the people;' and thus, while it is allowed them to associate others with such sacrifices, they may not themselves voluntarily renounce the whole benefit of them, and assign it to another for the consideration of a third of the mass—that is, for four or five sous. Really, my Father, little as I am skilled in such matters, I could contrive to give some plausibility to this opinion." "It would not be hard to do this," he replied; "the real difficulty would be in

opposing opinions, which have so obvious an appearance of soundness; this is only the property of great minds. The Père Bauny excels in this. It is delightful to see this profound casuist penetrating the 'pro' and 'con' of some question relating to the priesthood, and finding reason on both sides, with so much ingenuity and acuteness."

"In one place he remarks, Tract 10, page 474, 'We ought not to make a rule for compelling curates to perform mass every day, because such a rule would undoubtedly (*haud dubiè*) expose them to the risk of sometimes performing it, while under the guilt of mortal sin.' And nevertheless, in the same tract, p. 44, he says, 'Priests who have been paid for saying mass every day ought to do it, and cannot excuse themselves on the plea, that they are not always properly prepared for its performance, because they can always avail themselves of acts of penitence. And if they omit to do so, the fault is theirs, and not that of the party requiring such performance of mass.' And, in order to obviate the greatest of the difficulties in their way, he thus resolves the following question, in the same tract, q. 32, p. 457—'May a priest perform mass, on the same day that he has fallen into a mortal sin, on confessing himself previously? Villalolos says 'No, because of his impurity.' But Sancius says 'Yes, and without incurring guilt:' I hold the latter opinion to be sound, and the one that ought to be followed out in practice: *et tuta, et sequenda in praxi*."

"What! Father," I exclaimed, "followed out in practice! A priest, having fallen into such an enormity, shall dare, on the very same day, to approach the altar of

religion—on the authority of Père Bauny ! Ought we not to defer to the ancient laws of the church, which excluded from the sacrifice for ever—or at least for a long period—priests, who were guilty of irregularities of this kind, rather than adopt the views of these modern casuists, who dare to admit them to the altar on the very day, even, of the commission of such offences ?” “ You have a very short memory,” said the Father ; “ did I not just now state, that, according to the Perés Collot and Reginaldus, in morals we are to follow, not the ancient Fathers but the modern casuists.” “ I remember it perfectly,” said I ; “ but here there is something further ; these are the laws of the church.” “ Right,” he replied ; “ but you are not yet aware of that fine maxim of our brethren, ‘ the laws of the church lose their force when they cease to be observed ; ’ ‘ *cum jam desuetudine abierunt*,’ as is stated by Filiatius, t. 2. tr. 25, n. 33. We are better acquainted than the ancients with the actual necessities of the church. If we were so rigid in excluding the priests from the altar, you must see clearly we should diminish the number of masses. Now the number of masses tends so much to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, that I should say with our Père Collot, in his work on the Hierarchy, p. 611, *Rouen edition*, that there would not be too many priests ‘ if, not only all men and women (were it possible) but even inanimate bodies, and the very brute beasts—‘ *bruta animalia*’—were changed into priests, for the celebration of masses.’ ”

I was so surprized at the oddity of these fancies, that I could make no reply ; so he continued : “ But enough of the priests ; let us now proceed to the monks. As their

main difficulty lies in the obedience which they owe to their superiors, observe how this matter is softened down in their favour. This is from Castrus Palaüs, one of our brethren, Op. Mor. p. 1, Disp. 2, p. 6. ‘It is beyond dispute—*non est controversia*—that a monk who holds in his own mind a ‘probable’ opinion, is not bound to obey his superior, even if the opinion of such superior should be the more probable one: but it is, in that case, lawful for him to adopt that which is the most agreeable to himself—‘*quæ sibi gratior fuerit*:’—so also says Sanchez. And even, although the view of the superior may be the right one, he is still not bound to obedience; for it may not be right in all points, and in every degree—‘*non undequaque justò præcipit*:’ but only so ‘by probability:’ and therefore it is only by probability that you are bound to obey, and by probability released from obedience—‘*probabiliter obligatus, et probabiliter deobligatus*.’” “Doubtless, my good Father,” I replied; “it is impossible to prize too highly this valuable fruit of your double probabilities.” “It is indeed most useful,” he said: “but we must be brief. I will only give you one more extract from our celebrated Molina, in favour of such monks as have been expelled from their convents for disorderly conduct. The Peré Escobar quotes it, tr. 6, ex. 7, N. 111, in these terms: ‘Molina affirms that a monk, expelled from his monastery, is not obliged to alter his conduct, for the purpose of procuring re-admission: and is no longer bound by his ‘vow of obedience.’”

“Truly,” I exclaimed, “your ecclesiastics have an easy life of it! Your casuists do indeed treat them with sufficient indulgence. They do by them as they would

by themselves. I am afraid persons of other conditions of life will not fare so well at their hands. They must take care for themselves." "They would be no better off," he replied. "An equal measure of leniency is extended to all, from the highest to the lowest; and, to prove it, I must read to you the directions respecting valets.

"We have weighed, in their case, the pain they suffer, if conscientious, in serving masters of licentious habits: for if they decline executing all the errands of their employers, they lose their situations; if they obey, their consciences are wounded. To afford them relief, then, our 24 Fathers, tr. 7, ex. 4, N. 223, have indicated the services which they may render, with safety of conscience. These are some of them. 'To carry letters or presents; open doors and windows; to assist their masters to climb into windows; hold a ladder while they ascend:' all this is allowable and innocent. It is acknowledged, that to justify holding the ladder, there should be some unusual degree of risk; for it would otherwise be wrong to the master of the house, to enter by the window. You see how judicious this is."

"I expected no less," I replied, "from a work composed by twenty-four Jesuits." "But," added the Father, "our excellent Bauny has further enabled servants innocently to discharge their duties to their masters, by transferring the question, from the sins of which they render themselves the agents, to that of their own wages. He has admirably explained this in his 'Summary of Offences,' page 710, 1st edition. 'Let confessors well understand,' he says, 'that they are not to give absolution to valets for carrying criminal messages, if they make

themselves parties to the sins of their masters ; but, it is not on the contrary to be withheld, if such things be done for the consideration of their lawful gains.' And this is not difficult to understand ; for why should they make themselves parties to the offences of others, and suffer only penalties on account of them ?

" Father Bauny has also laid down this important rule, in favour of those who are not satisfied with their wages : ' Summary,' page 213, 4, 6th edition. ' May servants who are dissatisfied with their wages, increase them by taking such a portion of their masters' property as they think expedient, in order to make their pay equivalent to their services ? In certain cases they may do so, as when they are previously so reduced as to be obliged to accept any terms offered to them, and when other servants, in similar situations, receive higher wages, &c."

" Why, my good Father," I cried, " this passage is absolutely the history of Jean d'Alba." " What John d'Alba ?" said the Father, " who do you mean ?" " Why, do you not remember what passed in this very place in the year 1647 ? Where were you at that time ?" " I was giving instruction in cases of conscience," he replied, " in one of our colleges at a distance from Paris." " I see, then," I said, " that you are not acquainted with the affair ; I will relate it to you. I heard it from a person of undoubted veracity, in a party where I was the other day. He told us that this John d'Alba, being in service in the college of Clermont, Rue St. Jaques, and not being satisfied with his wages, appropriated to himself certain property of the Community, by way of compensation : that the superiors, on detecting him, threw him into prison,

on a charge of private robbery; and that the prosecution came before the Châtelet on the 6th of April, 1647 (if my memory serves me right); for he stated all these things with great minuteness, otherwise we should hardly have believed them to be possible. The accused delinquent, on interrogation, admitted that he had taken some metal dishes from the monks; but maintained, for all that, he had committed no theft, quoting in his justification the doctrine in question of Père Bauny, together with an extract from the writings of one of your Fathers, under whom he had studied cases of conscience, and which inculcated the same thing. On which M. de Montrouge, one of the leading members of the Châtelet, delivered the following opinion: ‘That the accused ought not to be acquitted on the authority of writings containing doctrines, illegal, pernicious, and opposed to all rules divine and human; the effect of which was to destroy the welfare of families, and authorize every domestic fraud. And his sentence was, that this too implicit disciple should be *flogged* before the college gates by the common executioner; and all the works of the Fathers, treating of larceny, should be *burnt* by the same hand; forbidding all persons at the same time, on pain of death, to teach, in future, any of the doctrines in question.’

“While they were awaiting the sequel of this decision, which was much approved, circumstances occurred, which had the effect of postponing judgment upon the proceedings. In the mean time, however, the prisoner *disappeared*, no one knew how, and without restoring the dishes. This was the sum of our informant’s statement; and he further told us that the judgment of M. de Mont-

rouge is still in the Registry of the Châtelet ; and may be seen by any one. The anecdote afforded us much amusement."

"Amusement ! What about ?" said the Father ; "what do you mean ? I am speaking of the maxims of our casuists ; I was going to give you those relating to the gentry, and you interrupt me by stories that have nothing to do with the matter." "I merely introduced the circumstance 'en passant,' I replied, "to remind you of a point of some importance, which seems to have been overlooked in establishing your 'doctrine of probability.'" "What?" said he, "what could have been overlooked by so many able men who have all concurred in it?" "It is just this," I replied ; "you have succeeded in placing those who adopt the doctrines quite at ease in regard to God, and their own consciences ; for you maintain they can run no risk in those respects, while they follow the opinions of a learned doctor : you have put them quite right with their confessors, for you make it compulsory on the priests to give absolution, in cases of the probable opinions in question, on pain of mortal sin : but you have not entirely secured them on the part of the temporal authorities ; in consequence of which they expose themselves to flogging and the gallows, in acting upon your probabilities : this is really a serious defect." "You are right there, I confess ; I feel obliged to you for the suggestion," said the Father ; "but it is because we have not the same power over the magistrates as over the confessors, which latter are obliged to report all cases of conscience to us : *there* we are absolute." "I understand you," I replied ; "but if on the one hand you are

judges of the confessors, are you not also *confessors* of the judges? Your powers are extensive; you should compel *them* to absolve all criminals whose offences have been committed on the strength of your probable opinions, upon pain of exclusion from the sacraments; lest this contempt and scandal should befall the doctrine in question, viz. that persons whom you have pronounced innocent in theory, should come to be flogged in practice. Unless this is done, how will you succeed in getting disciples?" "We must think of this," he said; "it is really important. I will propose the matter to our Father Provincial. In the mean time you might as well reserve these opinions of yours till another opportunity, and not interrupt me again, as I am now going to relate to you the maxims we have established in favour of the gentry: I positively will not go on, unless you promise to tell me no more of your stories."

This is all then, my friend, that you must receive from me to-day; for it will take more than one letter to communicate the whole of what I learned from my worthy friend in the course of a single conversation. In the mean time I remain ever, &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

ON THE METHOD USED BY THE CASUISTS IN REGULATING MOTIVES. THE PERMISSION GIVEN TO THEM TO TAKE LIFE, IF IN DEFENCE OF HONOUR AND PROPERTY, EXTENDED MOREOVER TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS ORDERS. CURIOUS QUESTION PROPOSED BY CARAMUEL, WHETHER IT IS LAWFUL FOR JESUITS TO KILL JANSENISTS.

SIR,

Paris, April 25, 1656.

AFTER appeasing the good Father, whose discourse I had somewhat interrupted by my story of John D'Alba, he recommenced it, on my assurance that I would not disturb him by anything more of the kind ; and he related to me the maxims of the casuists respecting the Aristocracy in the following terms :

“ You are aware that the ruling passion of persons of this class of life, is the maintenance of their honour ; by which they are continually hurried into excesses, which *seem*, undoubtedly, opposed to Christian piety. This would lead to their almost entire exclusion from the confessional, had not our Fathers somewhat relaxed, in their favour, the severe requirements of religion, out of a proper consideration for human infirmity. But being

desirous of reconciling their duties to God and the Gospel, and kindness to their fellow-men, and, amongst them, the people of the world, they have exerted all their ingenuity to devise expedients by which matters may be so tempered and adjusted, that the persons in question may maintain and retrieve their honour without a violation of conscience; and by this means preserve in a becoming harmony, two things usually regarded as opposed to each other—religion and the point of honour. But, in proportion as this aim was desirable, so was it difficult; the enterprize was noble yet laborious: you cannot but perceive this yourself.” “Surprisingly!” I replied, though coolly. “Surprisingly,” he cried; “it must indeed surprise and astonish every one. Don’t you know, that the Gospel, on the one hand, enjoins, ‘Render not evil for evil, but leave vengeance to God;’ and, on the other, that the laws of the world forbid us to endure an injury, but enjoin us rather to seek its redress, and *that*, often, by the death of the party inflicting it? Was there ever any thing apparently more contradictory? And yet, when I tell you, our Fathers have solved the difficulty, you merely say, it is surprising.” “I did not, perhaps, sufficiently explain myself, my good Father,” I replied; “I should, to say the truth, have held the thing to be impossible, if I had not known, from what I had before seen of your learned divines, that they can accomplish with ease what other men find to be impossibilities. This satisfies me that they have, in the present case, succeeded in devising methods, which I shall doubtless admire, when I become fully acquainted with them. Pray satisfy my curiosity.”

“If you really feel such an interest in the matter,” he rejoined, “I cannot refuse. Know then, that this great and astonishing principle is, our method of ‘regulating the motive;’* the importance of which, in our system of morals, is so great, that I could almost venture to compare it with the Doctrine of Probability. You have had some hints of it already ‘en passant;’ for when I explained how valets might reconcile becoming the bearers of certain improper messages, did you not observe that it was done by diverting their intention from the misconduct of which they made themselves the agents, to the profit which would accrue to them from it? This is one instance of what is meant by ‘regulating the intention:’ and in the same way, you have seen that persons giving money for church-preferment would be guilty of actual Simony, but for a similar ‘regulation.’ But I am now going to show you this eminent principle in all its splendour in the case of homicide—a practice which it has succeeded in justifying in a thousand cases of duels; and you will at once acknowledge its immense capability and value.” “I see already,” I said, “that every thing must be rendered lawful by means of it—nothing can escape.” “You are always going from one extreme to the other,” replied the Father; “you should cure yourself of that habit. To convince you, now, that every thing is not allowed, I can tell you, for example, we do not allow of any one committing sin with a deliberate purpose to do so; and if a person persists in having no other end in a transgression than the sin itself, we break with him; such conduct is

* ‘Diriger l’intention.’ (Fr.)

diabolical, without distinction of age, sex, or condition. But, if such be not the unhappy disposition of the party, then we endeavour to put in practice our method of directing or regulating the intention, which consists in proposing for the act committed a lawful motive and object. Not that we do not endeavour, as far as it is in our power, to turn men from forbidden courses; but when we are unable to prevent the act, we at least, purify the intention; and thus, correct the viciousness of the means by the goodness of the end.

“It is in this way that our leaders have found the means to tolerate the acts of violence practised in defence of honour; for they have only to substitute, as the motive, instead of a thirst of vengeance, which is criminal, a desire to defend our reputation, which the Fathers allow; and the thing is done. By similar means, they succeed in fulfilling all their duties towards God and their fellow-creatures: the world they satisfy by the permission of the act; and they comply with the Gospel in purifying the motive. All this was heretofore unknown; and for this, our Society is to be thanked. Do you understand the matter now?” “Perfectly,” I replied; “you give over to man the external and material act; and you assign to God the internal, spiritual intention; and by this equitable division, you reconcile human rules of conduct with those of the Divine will. But, my good Father, to confess the truth, I am a little suspicious of your premises; and entertain some doubt, whether your authorities will fully bear out your position.” “You are mistaken,” said the Father; “I advance nothing that I cannot prove, and

that, by so many passages, that their number, their authority and force, will fill you with admiration.

“ To show you, now, how our Fathers have brought the maxims of the Gospel into agreement with those of the world, hear our Père Reginaldus in Praxi, Liv. 21, N. 62, p. 260. ‘ Individuals are not allowed to avenge themselves, for St. Paul says, Rom. ch. xii. “ Recompense to no man evil for evil; ” and Eccles. ch. xxviii. “ He that avengeth shall find vengeance from the Lord, and he will surely keep his sin in remembrance.” ’ Besides, what is said in Scripture of the forgiveness of injuries, as in ch. vi. and xviii. of St. Matthew.” “ Certainly, my excellent Father, if, after this, your author asserts any thing beyond what is contained in Holy Writ, it is not for want of knowing better. What is his conclusion, however ? ” “ It is this,” said the Father; ‘ From all this it appears, that a military man may at the instant, pursue any one who has injured him ; not, indeed, with the intent to return evil for evil, but with that of preserving his honour: *Non ut malum pro malo reddat, sed ut conservat honorem.* ’

“ You see, now, how carefully the intention of rendering evil for evil is guarded against, seeing what is the prohibition of Scripture upon that point. It is never for an instant allowed. See Lessius, de Just. Liv. 2. C. 9. d. 12. N. 79. ‘ A person receiving a blow must not contemplate revenging it ; but he may desire to escape dishonour ; and for that purpose may instantly repel the injury, even at the point of the sword: *etiam cum gladio.* ’ So far are we from allowing a desire to take revenge on our enemies, that the Fathers will not permit

us ever to wish for their death, in an angry encounter. See Father Escobar, tr. 5. ex 5. N. 145. ‘ If your enemy endeavours to injure you, you must not desire his death, as a consequence of any act of hostility on your part ; but you may commit such act, to avoid detriment to yourself. And so strictly lawful is this (provided such be our intention) that our famous Hurtado de Mendoza says, ‘ We may pray to God to cause promptly the death of any one that persecutes us, if it cannot otherwise be averted.’ This is in his Work de Spl. Vol. 2. d. 15. Sec. 4. N. 48.”

“ My reverend Father,” I here interposed, “ the Church, I am afraid, has omitted to insert a collect of this nature among her prayers.” “ The Church,” he replied, “ has not introduced in her prayers every thing that may be made a matter of request to God. Besides, the thing was not possible, for the opinion in question is more recent than the Breviary : you are no chronologist. But to continue the subject, hear again this passage from Père Gaspar Hurtado, de Sub. pecc. diff. 9, quoted by Diana, p. 5. tr. 14. r. 99. (He is one of the twenty-four Fathers of Escobar.) ‘ An incumbent may, without committing mortal sin, desire the death of one who enjoys an annuity out of his benefice ; and a son, that of a father ; and they may rejoice when the event occurs, provided it be only for the benefit thus accruing, and not from any personal hatred.’ ”

“ Truly, my good Father,” I exclaimed, “ these are valuable fruits of your ‘ regulation of motives.’ I begin to see the vast extent of it ; nevertheless it appears to me, that there are still certain cases, interesting to the higher

classes, somewhat difficult of solution, although very important." "Let me hear them," said the Father. "Explain to me then," I replied, "how, by means of this regulation of the intent, it is lawful to fight a duel?" "The great Hurtado Mendoza," said the Father, "shall satisfy you at once, in a passage quoted by Diana, p. 5. tr. 14. r. 99. 'If a gentleman challenged in a duel, be known not to be a religionist, and it be notorious, from his habitual and unscrupulous laxity of conduct, that, if he refuse the challenge, it is not from any pious scruples, but from cowardice; and he would thus be liable to be stigmatized as chicken-hearted and unmanly—'*gallina et non vir*'—he may, to preserve his honour, repair to the place of rendezvous; not absolutely and with express intention of fighting, but only for the purpose of defending himself, if the challenger should attack him unjustly. His conduct will thus be thoroughly innocent.' For what harm is there in going to the field, walking about there, to meet another, and defending himself if attacked? In this way he commits no offence, as he does not accept the challenge, but has an entirely different intention. The acceptance of a challenge consists in an express intention to fight, which is not at all his case.' "

"You have not quite kept your word with me, my good Father. All this does not amount strictly to permitting a duel; on the contrary, your author sees the practice to be so absolutely forbidden that, in order to bring it within the license, he avoids admitting that it is a duel at all." "Oh! oh!" said the Father, "you are beginning to understand matters; I am delighted with you: I might say, however, that he therein allows all that duellists wish

for. But, as you like me to be exact in my answers, our Père Layman shall now give one for me, in which you will find he sanctions duelling in so many words; provided the intention be so adjusted, that the acceptance of a challenge shall be only for the preservation of honour or fortune. It is in Book 3, pa. 3, C. 111, N. 2 and 3. 'If a soldier in the army, or a gentleman of the court, be in danger of losing his honour or his prospects of advancement, by refusing a challenge, I do not see that he is to be condemned for accepting it.' Petrus Hurtado says the same, as reported by the celebrated Escobar, in tr. 1, ex. 7, N. 96 and 98. 'We may engage in a single combat in defence of our property, if no other way be left to us; for every one has a right to defend his own, even by the death of his enemies.'"

I could not but remember with admiration on hearing these passages, how the piety of our Sovereign* had induced him to use *his* authority for the abolition of duelling in his dominions, while the piety of the Jesuits had suggested to them the most ingenious expedients for sanctioning and authorizing the practice. But the worthy Father had so kindled with the subject, that I could not bring myself to check him, and he thus continued. "Lastly, we come to Sanchez—you see what kind of authorities I have to cite—and he goes even beyond this; for not only does he allow the acceptance, but the giving even of a challenge, provided the intention be properly directed. And Escobar follows him in his opinion, in the part before quoted, N. 97."

* Louis XIV.

“My Father,” said I, “I give up, if it be indeed so ; but I can never believe that he has written such a thing as this ; I cannot find it.” “Read it here yourself then,” he replied ; and, in truth, I did read the following in the Moral Theology of Sánchez, Liv. 2, C. 39, N. 7. ‘It is quite reasonable to affirm that a man may engage in a duel, to preserve his life, his honour, or his property (if the latter be considerable,) since he may be otherwise continually exposed to the unjust deprivation of them by vexatious suits and chicanery ; and he has no other way than this to preserve them.’ And Navarrus says most justly, that, for such a purpose, it is lawful both to accept and to give a challenge ; ‘*licet acceptare et offerre duellum.*’ And further, he may kill his enemy *secretly*.* And even in such encounters, he is not bound to resort to the process of a duel, if he can succeed in killing his enemy by secret means, and thus terminating the affair ; for in this way he will avoid both exposing his own life in a conflict, and participating in the sin which his antagonist would commit by engaging him in a duel. “Truly, my Father,” I said, “this is somewhat of a pious fraud ; but although very pious, it is a fraud still, to allow you thus to kill your enemy by treachery.” “Did I say,” he replied, “any thing about treachery ? God forbid ! I said, you might kill him *secretly*, and you all at once conclude he may be killed *treacherously* : as if they were the same things. Hear what Escobar says about killing treacherously, tr. 6, ex. 4, N. 16, and then you will understand better ; ‘To slay another treacherously is

* ‘Et aussi, qu’on peut tuer en cachette son ennemi.’ (Fr.)

when the person has no suspicion of your intention ; therefore he is not to be said to slay his enemy by treachery, even if it be by striking him from behind, or when taken in ambush—‘*licet per insideas, aut a tergo percutiat.*’ And in the same Treatise, N. 56 ; ‘ He that kills an adversary with whom he had been reconciled, under a promise not again to attempt his life, is not absolutely to be considered as killing treacherously, unless there had subsisted a very close friendship between them —‘*arctior amicitia.*’ You see,” he continued, “ that you don’t understand even the very terms in question, and yet you affect to pronounce authoritatively upon the matter.”

“ I confess,” I replied, “ that this is all new to me ; I gather from this definition that no one, probably, in the world, was ever destroyed treacherously ; we never think of killing any but our enemies ; and, according to Sanchez, we may freely slay—not to say treacherously, but by a blow from behind, or by ambuscade, a slanderer who molests or prosecutes us ? ” “ Yes,” said the Father, “ provided the intention be duly regulated ; you always forget that most important point. Molina maintains the same thing, Vol. 4, tr. 3, disp. 12. So also says the learned Reginaldus, Book 21, C. 5, N. 57, ‘ We may lawfully destroy false witnesses that are suborned against us.’ And again, according to our illustrious Fathers, Tannerus and Emanuel Sa, we may both destroy false witnesses and *the judge* also, if the latter conspires together with them. These are the words, tr. 3, disp. 4. 9. 8. N. 83, ‘ Sotus and Lessius say, it is not lawful to kill a false witness and a judge who conspire together to

cause the death of an innocent person ; but Emanuel Sa, and other writers, do well in disallowing this sentiment, at least as far as the *conscience* is concerned.' And he decides, in the same part, that it is lawful to kill both witness and judge."

"My respected Father," I now said, "I think I understand tolerably well your principle of directing the intention ; but I should further be glad to learn the consequences to which it leads, and the several cases in which this rule gives permission to take life. Let us, for fear of misapprehension, review all that you have enumerated ; for in a case like this, ambiguity would be dangerous. We ought clearly only to kill for a good purpose, and on a probable ground of lawfulness. You assure me then, that if the motive be properly regulated we may, on the authority of your Fathers, in order to defend our honour and even our property, accept a challenge, and sometimes give one ; we may secretly dispatch a false accuser, a perjured witness, and also the corrupt judge, who takes part with them ; and you further say that a man receiving a blow may, without incurring the sin of avenging himself, seek reparation at the point of the sword. But you have not told me to what extent this latter may be done." "There can be no doubt upon the question," he replied ; "to the extent of his *death*. This is proved completely by the learned Henreques, Book 14, C. 10, N. 3, and others of our Fathers cited by Escobar, tr. 1, ex. 7, N. 48, in these words ; 'We may kill any one who gives us a blow, although he flies from us, provided it be not done in hatred, or for vengeance ; and also that we do not give occasion by it to murders in *excessive numbers*, and such

as would be injurious to the *State*. And the reason is, that we may in this way protect our honour, as we would pursue a garment stolen from us; for although our honour cannot be taken possession of by an adversary in the way our clothes may be stolen, we may nevertheless recover it in the same manner, by the display of our power and authority, and thus secure the good opinion of our fellow men. For is it not the fact, that he who receives a blow is considered to have forfeited his reputation, till he has succeeded in killing him who has inflicted it.’”

All this seemed to me so horrible, that I could scarce refrain myself; but, in order to learn the whole of the matter, I allowed him to continue his discourse as follows: “And even we may, in order to avert a blow, kill the person who is preparing to inflict it, if we cannot otherwise escape. This is declared by several of our Fathers; for example, Azos, *Instif. Moc.* part 3, Book 2, p. 105 (he again is one of the 24 *Elders*.) ‘May a man of honour kill one who is about to inflict upon him a blow, or strike him with a stick? Some say No; and they reason, that the life of our neighbour is more precious than our honour; besides, that there is cruelty in taking the life of a man only to escape a blow. But others say this is lawful; and I certainly consider the opinion ‘probable,’ if there be no other way of escape; for, without this, the honour of innocent persons would be constantly exposed to the malice of the insolent. So our celebrated Filiutius, Vol. 2, tr. 29, C. M. N. 50; and Péré Hereau, in 2. 2. in his Treatise on Homicide; Hurtado de Mendoza, disp. 179, Sec. 16 § 137; and Becan, Som. t. 1. 9. 64. de Homicid. and the Fathers Flahaut

and Lecount in their writings, which the University in her third petition circumstantially reported, for the purpose, (although unsuccessfully) of denouncing them; and Escobar, in the same place, No. 48—all these authorities are to the same effect. In fact it is so generally maintained, that Lessius decides the matter as one uncontroverted by any of the Casuists, Book 2, C. 4, N. 76; for he cites a large number in its favour, and none against it. And he even adduces Peter Navarre, N. 77, who, speaking generally of affronts (of which none are more acute than a blow,) declares that by the concurrence of all Casuists — ‘*êx sententia omnium, licet contumeliosum occidere si aliter ea injuria arceri nequet.*’ Do you wish for further proofs?”

I thanked my friend: but I had heard only too much already. However, to see how far this damnable doctrine might be carried, I said, “But my good Father, is it not allowed to deprive of life for less serious causes? Might not the intention be so regulated, for example, as that death might be inflicted for giving another the lie?” “Certainly,” he replied, “According to our Father Baldelli, l. 3, disp. 24, N. 24, reported by Escobar, in the same place, N. 49: ‘It is lawful to slay one that gives you the lie, if he cannot be reprovèd in any other way.’ And, in the same manner, life may be taken for defamation; for Lessius, whom among others, Père Hereau follows, word for word, says in the place before quoted, ‘If a man endeavours to ruin my reputation by calumnies uttered before trust-worthy persons, and I have no way to rid myself of his injuries but by taking his life, may I do so?’ ‘Yes,’ say our modern authorities; ‘and that even

if the offence imputed be founded in fact, provided it have been heretofore concealed, and it be one that could not have been brought to light by the ordinary course of justice. And this is the proof. If you seek to wound my honour by the infliction of a blow, I have the means of averting it by strength of arm; it follows then that a similar defence is lawful if you aim at injuring me by word of mouth. Furthermore, we may protect ourselves from insults; we may equally do so from defamation. Finally, honour is dearer to every one than life: now, we are allowed to kill another to defend life, therefore we may kill to defend our honour.'

"These arguments are conclusive. They are not mere reasoning; they are demonstration. And the great Lessius actually affirms, in the same place, No. 78, that death may be inflicted even for an offensive gesture, or an expression of contempt. 'A man's honour,' he says, 'may be attacked and impaired in various ways, against which it is allowable to defend himself; such as a stroke of a cane, a blow, or contumelious words or gestures; *sive per signia*,' &c."

"My worthy Father," I now replied, "this constitutes indeed a most ample protection for our wounded honour; but surely life is sorely endangered, if we are thus at liberty with 'safe consciences to inflict death upon another for a mere slanderous speech or an uncourteous gesture!'"

"It is very true," he replied; "but as our Fathers are prudent persons, they have not failed to take the precaution of forbidding recourse to the doctrine in question on very slight occasions; for they are careful to subjoin:

‘ this ought *rarely* to be put in practice ’—‘ *practicè vix probari potest.*’ And this is indeed not without good reason; as thus”——“ Who can doubt it?” I said; “ Does not the law of God forbid to take life?” “ They do not go exactly upon *that* ground,” he rejoined: “ they consider it to be allowed by the rules of conscience, and by the dictates of absolute truth.” “ Then, why do they forbid it?” “ Listen,” he said: “ it is because a community would be depopulated, almost to extinction, if all the slanderers were to be destroyed. You will find this set forth in Reginaldus, Book 21, n. 63, p. 260: ‘ However the opinion, that we may take the life of another for defamation, be not without probability in theory, we must adopt the contrary view in practice; for we ought ever to avoid doing injury to the State in our manner of defending ourselves. Now it is plain that in killing others in this way, we should commit *too great* a number of murders.’ Lessius says the same, in the place before referred to: ‘ We must be careful that in carrying out this maxim, no injury be done to the *State*; for in that case, it must not be permitted—*tunc enim non est permittendus.*’ ”

“ So then, my Father, this is an interdiction of policy, and not of religion! How many do you suppose are likely to be kept in check by this caution; especially in the heat of blood? They will probably think they do the State no wrong by purging it of a flagitious character.” “ For this very reason, Père Filiutius adds to this consideration another most important one, tr. 29, ch. 3, N. 51. ‘ it is that we might expose *ourselves* to the arm of justice, by killing others for such causes.’ ” “ I told

you, my friend, that you would do nothing effectually, without getting the judges on your side." "The judges," said the Father, "being unable to penetrate men's consciences, regard only the external acts; while we, on the contrary, look chiefly at the intention; on that account it is that our maxims occasionally differ somewhat from theirs." "However that may be," I replied, "it clearly results from yours, that provided we avoid detriment to the State, we may take the life of one that slanders us, with a safe conscience, supposing always it be with safety to our own persons."

"But, my good Father, after all the care you have taken for the protection of our honour, have you done nothing for that of property? I know this is of minor importance; but that does not signify. I should think there might be found means to regulate the intention, so as to allow of taking life for its preservation also." "Doubtless," he replied, "all our Casuists agree in permitting it, and that, even if we are in no danger, ourselves, of personal violence, on the part of those attacking our property; as when they are in the act of flight! Azos, a member of our Society, proves this, pa. 3, Book 2, ch. 1. 9. 20."

"But, my friend, what should be the value of the property thus endangered, to justify such an extremity?" "It must be, according to Reginaldus, Book 21. ch. 5. N. 66. and Tannerus in 2. 2. disp. 4. 9. 8. d. 4. N. 69. property of considerable value 'in the estimate of an experienced person.' And Layman and Filiutius say the same thing." "That is nothing to the purpose, my Father; where are we to find this rarity, this experienced person,

who may make the estimate required? Why do they not fix exactly the amount in question?" "What!" said the Father, "do you think it so easy then to weigh the life of a man—a Christian—against money! Here it is, however, that you will find the value of our Casuists. See whether any of the ancient Fathers will tell you for what sum it may be lawful to kill a man. What do they say but simply, '*Non occides*'—Thou shalt not kill?" "Then who, pray, has taken upon himself to determine the amount in question?" I exclaimed. "It is," he replied, "the incomparable Molina, the glory of our Society; who, with inimitable discretion, has estimated it at six or seven ducats; for which sum he affirms it is lawful to kill a robber, even if he be in the act of flight.' It is in his 4 vol. tr. 3. disp. 16. d. 6. And in the same place he further says, 'That he should not dare to pronounce a man guilty of sin who should destroy another for endeavouring to rob him of property, even to the value of a crown, or less—*unius aurei, vel minoris adhuc volaris.*' And this has led Escobar to lay down the following general rule, N. 44. 'According to Molina, a man may lawfully take the life of another for the value of a crown.'"

"Oh, my good Father!" I cried, "tell me, I beg, where Molina has learnt to decide a point of such importance as this, without the aid of Scripture, the Councils, or the Fathers? I see plainly now that there are authorities far more enlightened than St. Augustine (though very dissimilar to him), 'upon the question of homicide, as well as that of grace.' I am now, however, sufficiently instructed in this question, and I quite understand that it

is only ecclesiastics who would have any scruples to murder such as invaded their honour or their property." "What do you mean?" cried the Father, "do you think it reasonable that those who most need to stand well with society should be alone exposed to insolence and injury? Our Fathers have provided against this anomaly; for Tannerus says, t. 11. d. 4. 9. 8. d. 4. N. 76. 'Ecclesiastics, and even members of religious orders, are allowed to take life in defence, not only of their persons, but of their property, or that of the communities to which they belong. Molina cited by Escobar, N. 43; Becan in 2. 2. tr. 11. 9. 7. de Hom. Concl. 2. N. 5; Reginaldus, l. 21. c. v. n. 68; Layman, l. 3, tr. 3. p. 3. c. 3. N. 4; Lessius, liv. 2. c. 9. d. 11. N. 72; and others, all hold the same language.

"And according to the celebrated Père Launy, it is even lawful for priests and monks to take the life of such as may be endeavouring to injure their reputation, in order to prevent the completion of their design—always, however, with due regulation of the motive. This is his language, t. 5. disp. 36. N. 118, 'An ecclesiastic, or a monk, may slay any one who threatens to accuse publicly his community, or even himself, of scandalous offences, provided there be no other means of preventing it; as when (for instance) the party would be forthwith proceeding to a general publication of his slanders, if not promptly destroyed; for, as it would be justifiable for such a one to kill a person who aimed at his life, it is equally lawful to take the life of one that threatens the honour of himself or his community; and that no less in the case of an ecclesiastic than a layman.'"

"I certainly was not aware of this," I said; "and, in fact, I had ignorantly supposed the very reverse to be the case; merely looking at the fact that the Church professes such abhorrence of blood, that she does not allow ecclesiastical judges to assist in criminal processes." "Do not fall into such mistake," said the Father; "Père Launy maintains conclusively this doctrine; although with a humility becoming a great man, he submits it to the discretion of prudent readers. And our illustrious champion Caramuel, who cites it in his 'Fundamental Theology, p. 543, regards it as so certain, that he affirms, 'the contrary is not to be deemed probable.' And he deduces from it a variety of admirable conclusions, such as the following, which he styles 'the conclusion of conclusions,' 'conclusionum conclusio;' a 'priest not only is allowed, in certain cases, to slay a calumniator, but it is also sometimes his duty to do it,—etiam aliquando debet occidere.'

"He investigates also various novel points upon this subject; among others this, 'Is it lawful for a Jesuit to take the life of a Jansenist?'" "This is indeed," I exclaimed, "a surprising question in your theology. I see plainly enough that according to Père Launy's doctrine, the poor Jansenists are dead men." "Not so fast," he rejoined; "Caramuel decides the very reverse, and from the same principles." "How is that?" "Because," he rejoined, "they do no injury to our reputation. These are his words, N. 1146 and 47. p. 547. and 8: 'The Jansenists call the Jesuits Pelagians; might they lawfully be killed for this? No; because the Jansenists no more impair the reputation of our Society than a

mote obscures the sun ; on the contrary, they have raised and increased it, although not intentionally on their part ; —occidi non possunt, quia *nocere* non potuerint.’”

“ So then, my excellent Father, the lives of the Jansenists hang only upon the question whether they have it in their power to injure your reputation ! Slender indeed is their tenure ; for once render it ever so little probable that they may do you harm, and they are obnoxious to the summary proceeding in question without scruple.* You may frame your argument very logically ; and nothing more is needed (after due *regulation* of the motive) to dispatch a man with an easy conscience. Oh happy those, who have learnt such a doctrine, and who do not choose to brook an affront : but most unhappy they who commit the offence ! I must say, however, my Father, it is safer to have to do with people who have no religion, than with such as are indoctrinated after this fashion. For after all, the motive of a person inflicting a wound affords little alleviation to him who suffers from it. He knows nothing of the secret intention ; and feels nothing but the pain to himself of the blow. And I don’t know if one should not suffer less from being brutally dispatched by an assassin, than to be conscientiously poignarded by a devotee.

“ Well, my good Father,” I added, “ I must tell you the truth, and say I am somewhat surprised at all this ; and these propositions of Père Launy and Caramuel do not altogether satisfy me.” “ Why not ? ” said the Father ; “ are you a Jansenist ? ” “ I have other reasons,”

* ‘ Les voilà *tuable* sans difficulté.’ (Fr.)

I replied. "I am in the habit of writing, from time to time, to a friend in the country, an account of the opinions of your Society. And although I do nothing more than simply and faithfully narrate their own words, I cannot be certain that I may not meet with some obtuse minds that would draw rather sinister conclusions from your principles." "Never fear," said the Father, "no harm will happen from it; I'll guarantee you. What our Fathers have printed *themselves*, and with the *approbation* of their superiors, it cannot be wrong or dangerous to publish."

What I writé to you then is on the word of this good Father: but now my paper fails me, although not my materials. They are so copious and so striking, that it would take volumes to communicate them. I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

CORRUPT DECISIONS OF THE CASUISTS RELATING TO
JUDGES, USURERS, THE 'MOHATRA' CONTRACT, BANK-
RUPTS, RESTITUTIONS, ETC. VARIOUS OTHER OBLI-
QUITIES OF THE SAME AUTHORITIES.

SIR,

Paris, May 22, 1656.

YOU would not suppose that people would have had the curiosity to enquire who we are : nevertheless, there are some who are endeavouring to detect us ; but they have not succeeded. Some take me for a Doctor of Sorbonne ; others attribute my letters to four or five different persons, who, like myself, are neither priests nor ecclesiastics. All these fruitless efforts convince me, that I have been not unsuccessful in my aim to be known by none but yourself and the worthy Father who takes so patiently my visits ; and whose discourse I am obliged, in return to endure, although with much distaste. I put however a constraint upon myself ; for if he were to perceive the disgust his statements excite in me he would not continue them, and thus I should be unable to fulfil my engagement, to make you acquainted with their whole system of morality. You may give me, I assure you, some credit for the violence I do to myself. It is not a little painful to see the whole

code of Christian morals overthrown by these unhappy perversions, without daring to contradict them. But I suspect, after having kept so strict a guard over my feelings, for your satisfaction, I shall break out for my own, when I find he has nothing more to tell me. However, I will refrain as much as possible; for the more I show myself inclined to listen, the more communicative he will be.

He gave me so much information on the last occasion, that I shall hardly know how to report it all to you. You will now see what convenient maxims they inculcate, for evading the duty of restitution. For—palliate it as they may—the principles which I am now proceeding to relate tend to nothing less, than to extenuate the practices of corrupt judges, of usurers, bankrupts, rogues, abandoned women, and tricksters; who are all most leniently absolved from the necessity of restoring the ill-gotten fruits of their several vocations. These were the subjects of our last conversation.

“At the commencement of our interview,” he said, “I promised to explain to you the maxims of our Society for the direction of the various conditions of society. You have already learnt those relating to beneficiaries, priests, religious orders, servants, and the aristocracy; we will proceed now to the others, and begin with the judges.

“I must first of all tell you one of the most important and beneficial of the principles laid down by our Fathers in favor of this class of persons. It is that of the learned Castro Palao, one of our twenty-four Elders; these are his words: ‘May a judge, in a question of equity, pronounce judgment according to a certain probable opinion,

in preference to another opinion which is more probable? Yes, and even if it be contrary to his own: *imo, contra propriam opinionem.*' And he is confirmed in this by our Father Escobar, tr. 6. ex. 6. N. 45." "Truly, my good Father," I exclaimed, "this is an admirable commencement! The judges must be indeed beholden to you; and I am surprized that they should ever oppose your probabilities, as we find them sometimes doing, seeing how favorable they are to themselves: You give them, by these methods, the same power over the *fortunes* of the community, as you yourselves exercise over their consciences." "You ought to see," he replied, "that it is from no regard to our own interests that we thus act, but merely from a concern for the quiet of their consciences; and this is where our eminent Molina has been successful in respect to presents made to the judges.

"In order to satisfy their scruples in receiving these kind of douceurs, he has taken the pains to enumerate the several cases in which they may take them conscientiously, in the absence of any special law forbidding it. It is in his t. 1. tr. 2. d. 88. N. 6. as follows: 'Judges may receive presents from parties when given from motives of friendship or gratitude for justice rendered them; or as an inducement to render such in time to come; or in the hope that they may take an especial interest in their affairs, or dispatch them with promptitude.' Our learned Escobar also says, on this subject, tr. 6. ex. 6. N. 43. 'If there be several individuals, none of whom have greater claim to dispatch than others, is it a sin in the judge to receive a gratuity from one on condition—'*ex parte*'—to give him the preference in dispatch over

the others? Certainly not, according to Layman; for, by natural right, he does no injury to the others, when he concedes to one, in consideration of his gratuity, what he might have given to any other, as he pleased: nay, being equally bound to all by the equality of their claim, he is still more so to the giver of the present which is made for the purpose of securing the judge's good offices; which services may lawfully be secured by a consideration in money—*'Quæ obligatio videtur pretio æstimabilis.'* ”

“ My reverend Father,” I here interposed, “ I cannot but be surprised to hear of such an indulgent code as this, unknown too, as it is, to the highest of our legal dignitaries. Why, our chief president has just introduced into Parliament an Act for prohibiting certain registers to accept gratuities for this very species of preference; a plain proof that he is far from thinking such practices allowable in the judicial office; and every one has extolled a reform so salutary to all parties.”

The good Father, surprised at my remark, replied, “ Indeed, I was not aware of that. Our opinion, understand, is only a ‘*probable*’ one; the contrary may be *probable* also.” “ Truly, my Father,” I said, “ it is believed that M. Le President has done a more than ‘*probable*’ service; and has arrested by its means a long-continued course of public corruption.” “ Well, on the whole, I am of the same opinion,” the Father rejoined, “ but let us proceed; we will leave the judges.” “ Quite right,” I said; “ particularly as they don’t seem very grateful for the indulgence you show them.” “ It is not exactly that,” rejoined the good Father; “ but there is

so much to be related under the various heads, that we must be brief upon each individually.

“Let us now go on to the case of men of business. You know, the great difficulty with them is to wean them from usurious practices: and this is what our Fathers have the most assiduously aimed at; for they detest this vice, as Escobar has it, tr. 3, ex. 5. N. 1. ‘To say that usury is not a sin is heresy.’ And Père Bauny in his ‘Summary of Sin,’ fills several pages with the penalties incurred by usurers. He declares that they ‘are infamous in life, and unworthy of Christian burial after death.’ ”

“My good Father!” I exclaimed, “I did not think he could have been so severe.” “He is so, I assure you, when there is a necessity for it; but, then, this rigid Casuist, observing that it is only a love of gain that urges to usury, says, in the same place, ‘It would be benefitting not a few persons, if, while secured from the evil tendencies of usury, as well as from the sinful propensity which leads to it, they could be assisted to derive an equal profit from their money in a good and legitimate employment of it, as from usurious practices.’ ”

“Doubtless, Father, there would be no usurers after that,” I interposed. “And for this purpose,” he continued, “our author has furnished a general rule for all classes of persons, gentlemen, presidents, councillors, &c.; and one so simple, that it consists of nothing more than the pronouncing a few words previous to a loan of money; after which they may receive their interest without fear of its partaking of the nature of usury; although, otherwise, it would undoubtedly have been such.”

“And what then are these mysterious words, my Father?” “Here they

are in his own terms ; for you are aware the writer has composed his work on the ‘ Summary of Offences,’ in French, that every one may understand it. They are as follows : ‘ Celui à qui on demande de l’argent répondra donc en cette sorte ; Je n’ai point d’argent à prêter ; si ai bien à mettre à profit honnête et licite. Si desirez la somme que demandez pour la faire valoir par votre industrie à moitié gain, moitié perte, peut être m’y resoudrai-je. Bien est vrai qu’à cause qu’il y a trop de peine à s’accommoder pour le profit, si vous m’en voulez assurer un certain, et quant et quant aussi mon sort principal, qu’il ne coure fortune, nous tomberions bien plus tôt d’accord, et vous ferai toucher argent dans cette heure.’*

“ Is not that now a most easy way of getting money without committing a sin ? And is not Père Bauny right when he says in his concluding part, ‘ This is, in my opinion, a method by which multitudes of persons who would otherwise by their usurious extortion, and unlawful bargains, provoke the just displeasure of God, may ensure their safety in rendering their gains honest and lawful.’ ”

“ My good Father ! ” I exclaimed, “ these are indeed words of most wonderful efficacy. They must, I am satisfied, possess some secret virtue in neutralizing the crime of usury far beyond my comprehension ; for I have always hitherto supposed the offence to consist simply in receiving back a larger amount than that which had been lent.” “ You have a very imperfect notion of the matter,” he said : “ usury, according to our Fathers, consists

* This being somewhat antiquated French, and not admitting of a very literal rendering, I have thought it best to leave it in the original language. (Transl.)

almost exclusively in an intention to take an usurious profit. And thus, Père Escobar lays it down, that usury may be avoided by a simple change of the intention. You will find it at tr. 3, ex. 5, N. 4, 33, 44; 'It would be an usurious act,' he says, 'to take interest from those to whom we lend money, if it be exacted as of right; but if received as a matter of gratitude, it is then not usury.' And at N. 3, 'It is not allowed to intend directly to make a profit of money lent; but when received by way of consideration on the part of those to whom it is lent—'*medié benevolentia*'—that is not usury.'

"It must be allowed," he continued, "that there are refined ways of proceeding: but one of the best, in my opinion, (for we have several to make choice of) is that of the 'Contract of Mohatra.' "The Contract of Mohatra?" I asked. "I see," he continued, "you are not acquainted with it. It is only the name that is peculiar. Escobar will explain it, in tr. 3, ex. 3, N. 36. 'The Mohatra Contract is one by which persons buy merchandize at high prices on credit, and sell it again, simultaneously, to the same persons, at low rates, and for ready money.' This, you see, is the Contract of Mohatra; by which means they acquire a certain amount in ready money, and remain in debt to the party for the surplus." "But, my Father, can any one besides Escobar have sanctioned such a plan? Do any other of your writers mention it?" "How little you are acquainted with these matters!" he replied. "The latest work on Moral Theology, printed this very year at Paris, treats of the Mohatra, and very profoundly; it is entitled '*Epilogus Summarum*;' and is an abridgment of all the summaries of theology of our

Fathers Suarez, Sanchez, Lessius, Fagánde, Hurtado, and other celebrated Casuists, as expressed in the title. You will find it at p. 54. 'The Mohatra is, when a man wants to raise twenty pistoles, and buys of a merchant goods to the amount of thirty pistoles, payable in a year, selling the same to him simultaneously for twenty pistoles, ready money price.' Thus, you see, this Mohatra is not an obscure mode of procedure." "Well, my kind Father," I asked, "and is this sort of contract allowed?" "Escobar," he replied, "says in the same place that there are laws which prohibit it under severe penalties." "Then it is useless." "By no means; for Escobar himself goes on to prescribe methods by which it may be permitted: 'although even,' he says, 'the person who buys and sells may primarily intend to make a profit; provided, however, in the sale he does not exceed the *highest* price of merchandise of that description; and (in re-purchasing,) he does not go beyond the lowest; and also, that no previous agreement be made, either express or implied.' But Lessius, de Jael, Book 2, C. 21, d. 16, says, 'Even if the sale have been made with the intention to repurchase at the lowest price, we are not bound to make restitution of the profit, unless in the way of charity, in case the party of whom the advantage has been gained, be in a state of indigence; and provided also it can be done without inconvenience to ourselves;—' *si commodè potest*.' This is saying every thing that is possible." "In truth, my Father, I cannot but think that more indulgence might be blameable." "Ah," said he, "our Fathers know just the exact point where they ought to stop!

You see in that very circumstance the usefulness of the ‘Mohatra.’

“I could have furnished you,” he continued, “with more of their opinions upon these points, but these will suffice; and I must now acquaint you with our views respecting persons in embarrassed circumstances.

“Our Fathers were very desirous of alleviating the privations of such persons; for which purpose, if they have not sufficient property to live respectably upon, and to pay their debts also, they are permitted to secure a part to themselves by becoming bankrupts. This is the decision of Père Lessius, and confirmed by Escobar, tr. 3, ex. 2, N. 163, ‘May a person who has become bankrupt, retain with safe conscience such part of his property as is necessary for maintaining his family in respectability—*ne indecoré vivat?*’ I maintain, with Lessius, that he may; and that, even, if it have been acquired by injustice, and notorious offences—*ex injustitia et notorio delicto*; although in the latter case he may not retain so large an amount as otherwise.” “How! my Father, by what strange species of charity is it that you allow property obtained in this way to remain in the possession of those who have acquired it by fraud, rather than to fall to the creditors, to whom, of right, it belongs?” “We cannot satisfy every body,” he replied, “and our Fathers have especially aimed at relieving the unfortunate. And thus, with an especial view to the indigent, the celebrated Vasquez, quoted by Castro Palao, t. 1, tr. 6, d. 6, N. 12, says, ‘When we see a swindler resolutely bent upon defrauding a poor person, we may, to avert his purpose, assign to him some very rich person to commit his fraud

upon, instead of the other party.' If you have not got Vesquez or Castro Palao, you will find the same thing in Escobar ; for, as you are aware, almost every sentiment of importance is propounded in common by the twenty-four Elders : it is at tr. 5, ex. 5, N. 120., ' On the practice of our Society, respecting charity to our neighbour.' "

" That is certainly a remarkable species of charity," I observed, " to save one person from sustaining loss at the expense of another. But I should think, to render it complete, the person giving such an intimation ought in conscience to make good to the rich man the loss that he occasions him." " Not at all," he replied, " he does not rob him himself ; he only gives information to another to do so. Hear, now, the judicious decision of Père Bauny in another case, which will surprise you still more, and lead you again to suppose that restitution ought to be commanded. It is in the 13th chap. of his ' Summary.' These are his own words ; ' A person desires a soldier to assault one of his neighbours, or burn the barn of some one who has offended him. It is asked whether, in case of the soldier being a defaulter, the other person at whose instance the wrong was done, ought to make it good ? I think not. For no one is bound to restitution, where no wrong has been committed. Is it a wrong to ask a favour of another ? Whatever the request be, the other is at liberty to grant it, or refuse. Whichever way he inclines, it is purely of his own will ; nothing induces him but his own kindness and facility. If then the soldier in question does not repair the injury, the other party ought not to be compelled to do it, at whose instance the innocent person has suffered the wrong.' "

This passage had nearly put a stop to our conversation, for I was on the point of bursting into a violent fit of laughter at the idea of "the kindness and facility" of the supposed incendiary of the barn; and the absurd reasonings, which went to exempt from restitution the real author of the conflagration—a crime which our jurisprudence would have visited with *death*. But I knew if I did not restrain myself, the good Father would be offended, for he spoke with all seriousness; and thus continued, with equal gravity.

"From these various instances you ought now to be convinced how frivolous are your objections. Notwithstanding, we will proceed with the subject of embarrassed persons. For their relief, several of our Fathers—and among them Lessius—Book 2, Ch. 12, N. 12, state 'that it is lawful to *steal*, not only under pressure of extreme want, but also under circumstances of heavy, though not absolute, necessity.' Escobar quotes this also, tr. 1, N. 29, ex. 9." "That is surprising," I said; "there is nobody in the world who may not come to experience this pressing necessity, and whom you would not in this way authorize to rob with a safe conscience. And even if you were to limit the sanction to those only who were really in such circumstances, you would open the door to an infinity of larcenies, which the judges visit with punishment, notwithstanding this grave necessity; and which *you* ought yet more signally to reprove—you, who are bound to uphold in society not only the principles of justice, but of charity also, both which are overthrown by these maxims. For, is it not a violation of these principles, and the greatest wrong that can be inflicted, for one man to cause

another to be deprived of his property for his own advantage? This, at least, has always hitherto been my belief." "It does not, however, hold in all cases," said the Father; "for the great Molina teaches, Vol. 2, tr. 2, disp. 328, N. 8, 'that the rule of charity does not require that we forego an advantage ourselves, to save our neighbour from a similar loss.' This he states, in order to establish what he further advances in the following passage, 'We are not bound in conscience to make restitution of property, which may have been given us by another person, for the purpose of evading his creditors.' And Lessius, who maintains the same opinion, confirms it by a like principle in his 2d Book, C. 20, dist. 19, N. 168.

"Now *you* are not so considerate," he continued, "towards persons in distressed circumstances; our Fathers are more indulgent. They do equal justice to the poor and the rich. Nay, further, they are not unmindful even of those who fall into sin. For though they strongly censure the offenders, they nevertheless do not hesitate to inculcate, that property acquired by evil practices may be justifiably retained — '*Quamvis mulier illicitó acquirat, licité tamen retinet acquisita.*' And to the same effect our Fathers unanimously decide, that what a judge receives from a party, whose case is bad, to induce him to give an unjust decision in his favour, and what a man of arms gains for committing a homicide, and the money gained by other infamous crimes, may be all lawfully retained. This has been collected by Escobar from various of our authorities, and condensed into one general rule, in tr. 3, ex. 1, N. 33, as follows; 'Property gained

by scandalous offences, such as murder, unjust sentences, licentiousness, &c. becomes a lawful possession, and is not required to be restored.' And again tr. 5, ex. 5, N. 53, 'We may dispose of property acquired for the commission of homicide, unjust decisions, infamous crimes, &c., because the possession has become one of right, and we acquire a lawful property in that which we have ourselves gained.'"

"My worthy Father," I here interposed, "I must say this is a mode of acquisition altogether new to me; am I to believe that justice authorizes and admits as valid the reward of assassination, corruption, and adultery?" "I know nothing," he replied, "of what law-books may hold; but I know that our Society, who are the true guides of conscience, affirm what I have stated. It is true, they except one case, in which restitution is required; it is 'when money has been received from such as have not the power lawfully to dispose of property; such as infants, and *religious orders*.' For our great Molina excepts them in t. 1, de Just. tr. 2, disp. 94. 'Nisi mulier accepisset ab eo qui alienare non potest, ut a religioso et filio familias.' In that case it must be restored. Escobar cites this passage in tr. 1, ex. 8, N. 59, and confirms the opinion in tr. 3, ex. 1, N. 23."

"My reverend Father," I said, "your religious orders are here better treated than others." "Not at all," he replied; "is not the same thing done by *minors* generally, in which class members of religious orders rank during the whole of their lives? It is perfectly just to except them. But in regard to all other persons, it is not obligatory to make restitution of what has been received

for evil actions. Lessius fully proves this in his 2d Book, 'de Just. C. 14, d. 8, N. 52.' 'For,' says he, 'a criminal action may be estimated by a price in money, taking into account the advantage gained by him who causes it to be committed, and the trouble incurred by him who commits it; and therefore it is not compulsory to refund what has been received for the commission of the act, whatever be its nature—homicide, corrupt sentences, impurity (for there are instances of every description,) provided it has not been received from such as have not a legal power to dispose of property. You will perhaps say that he who receives payment for an ill action commits a sin, and therefore should not be allowed either to receive or retain it. But I reply, that after the thing is done, there is no sin either in paying, or returning the payment. The great Filiutius enters still more into detail on the subject. He says 'we are bound in conscience to pay on a different scale for actions of this kind, according to the condition of the persons committing them; and that some are entitled to more than others. And this he establishes by the soundest reasons—tr. 31, C. 9, N. 23; 'Occultæ fornicariæ debeter pretium in conscientia, et multó majore ratione, quàm publicæ. Copia enim quàm occulta facit mulier, &c. &c. &c.'"

He here showed me, in the pages of these authors, things of this description so *detestable*, that I should not dare to transcribe them, and such, that the Father was himself shocked at them (for he was really a well-meaning man,) although the respect he entertained for these worthies made him receive with deference every thing that fell from them. I remained silent, however, although

less from a wish that he should continue his details, than from astonishment to find the writings of any religious men filled with sentiments, at once so horrible, so unjust, and so absurd. He therefore pursued his discourse without interruption, and concluded as follows: "For these reasons, our illustrious Molina (I hope you will be convinced after this) thus decides the question; 'When money has been received for the commission of a criminal act, ought it to be restored? We must here,' says this great man, 'draw a distinction: if the act, for which money was received, has not been done, the money must be returned; but if it has been accomplished, it need not be:' 'si non fecit hoc malum, tenetur restituere; secus, si fecit!' This is cited by Escobar in tr. 3, ex. 2, N. 138.

"These are some of our principles touching restitution. You have now had a good lesson for one day; I should like to see how you have improved by it. Answer me then. 'When a judge has received money from a party in a suit, for procuring a judgment in his favour, is he bound to restore it?' You will say 'No,' I replied. "I am not so clear," he said; "have I said any thing to that effect, generally? I have told you he is not bound to make restitution, if he has given the judgment in favour of the party whose right is not good. But if a man has right on his side, would you have him pay for a decision in his favour when it is his own lawfully? You see you are under a mistake. Don't you perceive that a judge is bound to do justice, and therefore ought not to make it matter of purchase; on the other hand, he is not bound to injustice, and therefore may receive payment for it?"

All our leading authorities agree in this—Molina, disp. 94 and 99; Reginaldus, Book 10, N. 184, 5, 7; Filiutius, tr. 31, N. 220 and 8; Escobar, tr. 3, ex. 1, N. 21 and 23; Lessius, Book 2, C. 24, d. 8, N. 55—‘A judge is strictly bound to restore money that he has received for deciding justly, provided it have not been given by way of mere liberality. (*per liberalitê*,) but he is not bound to restore what he has received from a man in whose favour he has given an unjust judgment.’”

I was amazed at these fanatical decisions; and while reflecting upon their pernicious consequences, the Father propounded another question to me, saying, “Answer me now more circumspectly: Is a man that has been engaged in divinations bound to restore what he has gained by his craft?” “Just as you please, reverend Father,” I replied. “As I please! That is good: one would think, from your way of speaking, that truth was dependent upon our pleasures. I see, however, you will not find this out by yourself. Learn now how Sanchez solves the difficulty—Sanchez, remember! First, he draws this distinction, Som. Book 2. c. 38. N. 94, 5, and 6; ‘Has the diviner made use of astrology and other natural means, or has he used diabolical arts? For in the one case he is bound to restitution, although not in the other.’ Now you must tell me which is that case.” “There is no difficulty in that,” said I. “I see what you mean,” he rejoined; “you think he ought to refund, in the supposition that he has been dealing with demons. You are quite wrong; it is just the contrary. This is Sanchez’s solution, in the same passage: ‘If the diviner has not taken the pains to ascertain by diabolical means

that which he could not learn by any other—*si nullam operam opposuit ut arte diaboli id sciret*—he must make restitution ; but if he has taken the pains to do so, he is not so bound.’” “ And how do you explain this, my Father ?” “ Don’t you understand ?” said he ; “ it is because we may divine by diabolical arts, but not by astrology, which is a deceptive system.” “ But, my good Father, suppose the devil does not give a true answer ; for there is no more truth in his arts than in those of astrology ; must not restitution be made in that case, and for the same reason ?” “ Not always. ‘ *Distinguo*,’ says Sanchez on this point ; ‘ for if the diviner be unacquainted with diabolical arts—*si sit artis diabolicæ ignorus*—he is bound, in that case, to restore : but if he be an accomplished conjurer, and have done all that he could to get at the truth, he is then not bound : in such a case, the diligence of the diviner is to be made a consideration of money—*diligentia a mago apposita est pretio æstimalis*.’” “ Your plan is a sensible one,” I said ; “ by this means you will make the diviners diligent and accomplished in their art ; through the hope, according to your principles, of making lawful gains in a faithful service of the public.” “ I suspect you are jesting,” rejoined the Father ; “ that is very unbecoming ; if you were to talk in this way where you were not known, you might be suspected, by those who did not understand you, of turning religious matters into ridicule.” “ I could easily clear myself from that reproach,” I replied ; “ for I believe, if any one were to take the trouble to examine the real meaning of my words, there would not be found one that did not imply the reverse ; and the time may come

perhaps, before our communications close, when I shall have the opportunity of making it fully apparent." "Oh! Oh!" said the Father; "you are not joking now." "Indeed," I replied, "the reproach that I was making a jest of sacred things would be to me as painful as it would be unjust." "I did not mean exactly to say as much as that; but let us talk a little more seriously," he rejoined. "I am quite disposed to do so," I replied, "if you wish it; but it must rest with yourself. I must confess, however, I have heard with surprise that your Fathers have so extended their cares to all descriptions of persons, as to make regulations for legalizing the profits of soothsayers!" "We cannot," he said, "write for too many sorts of men, nor particularize too much, nor recapitulate too often the same directions. You will see that, by the following passage from one of our greatest divines. Judge for yourself; it is our present Père Provincial, the revered Père Cellot, in his 8th Book on the Hierarchy, ch. 16. § 2; 'We know an instance of a person,' he says, 'who was taking a large sum of money for restitution, by his confessor's order; and stopping on his way at a bookseller's, asked if he had anything new—'*nam quid novi?*' He was shown a new work on Moral Theology; and, turning over the leaves carelessly and without reflection, he stumbled upon his own identical case, and ascertained that he was under no obligation to make restitution. Upon which, being relieved of the burden of his scruples, but retaining that of his money, he returned with a light heart to his home; '*abjectâ scrupuli sarcinâ, retento auri pondere, levior domum repetiit.*'

"Now, say," he continued, "whether the knowledge of

our maxims is not of some utility? Will you laugh at them now? Will you not rather, with Père Cellot, make this pious reflection upon the fortunate encounter; 'Events of this kind are to be regarded, in respect of God, as proofs of his providential care; in respect of his guardian angel, as an instance of his vigilance; and in respect of those to whom they occur, as the result of their predestination. God has from all eternity determined that the golden chain of their salvation should depend upon certain contingencies, rather than others. If such a person had not written, such a one had not been saved. Let us then conjure, by the bowels of Jesus Christ, those who cavil at the number of our authors, not to censure works which the eternal election of the Almighty and the blood of Jesus Christ has procured to be written for them.' Sweet words! by which this learned man establishes his proposition; how useful is it that a number of authors have written upon moral theology!—' *Quàm utile sit de Theologia morali multos scribere!*' "

"My Father," I here said, "I will defer till another opportunity the expression of my opinion upon this passage, and will at present say no more than that, as your maxims are so adapted for general usefulness, and it will be so advantageous to give them publicity, you must continue to put me in possession of them; for I assure you that the friend to whom I transmit them will not fail to bring them under the notice of very large numbers of persons. Under other circumstances we should not have thought of availing ourselves of them; but we do really consider it to be most advantageous that the world should be acquainted with them." "It is on that very account,"

he rejoined, " that I am careful to withhold nothing from you ; another time I shall be willing to inform you of those facilities and conveniences which our Fathers allow to men, in their passage through life, to render their salvation easy, and soften the gloom of devotion. In this way, having learnt what concerns each particular condition of society, you will understand every thing relating to men in general, and acquire a perfect insight into our system." Having said this, the Father left me. I remain, &c.

P.S. I have continually forgotten to say, there are several editions of Escobar. If you purchase one, get that of Lyons, which has in the frontispiece a lamb standing over a book sealed with seven seals ; or else that of Brussels of 1651. As these are the latest, they are more accurate and copious, than the earlier editions of Lyons of the years 1644 and 1646.

. Subsequent to all the above-mentioned, there was a new edition published at Paris by Pegit, more accurate than any of its predecessors. But the opinions of Escobar may be still better learnt from the Grande Theologie Morale published at Lyons. (Ed.)

LETTER IX.

ON THE FALSE WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN MARY INTRODUCED BY THE JESUITS. VARIOUS FACILITIES INVENTED BY THEM FOR ATTAINING SALVATION WITHOUT LABOUR, AND AMIDST THE CONVENIENCES AND ENGAGEMENTS OF LIFE. THEIR MAXIMS IN REGARD TO AMBITION, ENVY, GLUTTONY, EQUIVOCATION, MENTAL RESERVATION, INDULGENCES ALLOWED TO FEMALES AND THEIR DRESS, GAMING, HEARING MASS.

SIR.

Paris, July 3, 1656.

I cannot give you any better salutation than that with which the good Father greeted me the last time I saw him. As soon as he perceived me, he said, looking at a book which he held in his hands; "If any one had the power of opening to you the gates of Paradise, would he not render you an invaluable service? Would you not give millions to possess a key, by which you could enter in at your pleasure? There is no occasion to incur any expense: here is one—nay a hundred, far more serviceable." I was not aware whether the Father was reading, or whether these were his own words; but he soon set me right: "These are the opening words of an admirable work of Père Bauny, a member of our Society; for I give

you nothing of my own." "What work?" I asked. "This is its title; 'Paradise opened to Philagie;' by means of 100 formularies of devotion easy to be performed, addressed to the Mother of God." "What! my Father, each of these easy prayers sufficient to open heaven." "Yes," he replied; "see it made plain in the words that follow, 'Each of the prayers to the Mother of God, which you will find in this book, is a key of heaven to open to you the whole of Paradise, provided you duly perform it.' And further, he says in conclusion, 'he will be satisfied, if only one of the formularies be repeated.'"

"Let me then hear one of the easiest, my Father," I said. "They are all easy," he replied; for "instance, 'Salute the image of the Virgin; repeat the little chaplet 'Des Dix Plaisirs' of the holy Mary; often repeat her name; give a commission to the angels to do homage to her for us; wish more churches built to her than all Sovereigns have hitherto built; wish her 'Good morning' and 'Good evening' at the beginning and close of the day; repeat every day 'Ave Maria' in honour of the Virgin's heart.' And he affirms that this act of devotion fails not to secure us a place in the heart of the Virgin." "Provided, I suppose, that our heart be previously given to her?" "That is not necessary," he replied, "in the case of a person not yet sufficiently detached from the world. Listen again: 'Heart for heart is indeed what ought to be yielded; but yours, I may suppose, is a little too much attached—clings somewhat too fast to the creature; I dare not therefore ask you, at the present time, to surrender that little vassal that you call your heart.'

So he contents himself with asking only for the Ave Marias which he had before enjoined. These are found in the formularies at pages 33, 59, 145, 156, 172, 258, and 420 in the first edition." "This is all admirably convenient," I said; "surely, no one can be damned after this!" "Alas!" replied the Father, "I see you are not aware, how hard are the hearts of some. There are persons who will not even give themselves the trouble to repeat daily these two little words, 'Bonjour, Bonsoir,' because they require a certain effort of memory. And on this account Père Bauny has been obliged to furnish them with some still easier methods; such as to carry day and night a chaplet on the arm, in the form of a bracelet, or wear a rosary, or even an image of the Virgin. This is found at pages 14, 326, and 449. You will not say now that I have not furnished you with easy means of gaining the favor of the blessed Virgin, as says Père Bauny, p. 100." "Very easy indeed, my excellent Father," I replied. "Why," continued he, "it is all that could be done; and I should think that it is sufficient: he must be a scape-grace indeed that could not find in all his life-time a single moment to put a chaplet upon his arm, or take a rosary out of his pocket, and thus secure his salvation with such certainty, that those who have tried it have never failed in the experiment, let them have lived as they will: although we always recommend them not to fail to live a good life. I will give you only one example (at page 34). It is of a woman, who performed every day the devotional exercise of saluting the images of the Virgin, while she passed all her life in a state of mortal sin, and died in the same; yet was she infallibly saved by the

merit of this act of devotion." "And how was this?" I demanded. "Because our Lord expressly undertook to achieve her resurrection," was the reply. "So certain it is that none can perish who perform any of these devotional acts."

"I well know, my Father," I remarked, "that these devotions to the Virgin are a powerful instrument of salvation; and that the smallest of them possess great efficacy, when they proceed upon principles of faith and charity; as has been seen in the case of the holy men who have practised them. But to teach such as perform them; that, without forsaking their sinfulness of life, they shall at their death be converted, and afterwards raised to glory, appears to me more calculated to encourage sinners in their evil ways, by a false peace and rash security, than to wean them from their sins by that true conversion which grace alone can effect." "What does it matter," replied the Father, "by what means we enter into paradise, provided we do get there? As says, on a similar subject, our celebrated Father Benet, formerly our Provincial, in his excellent work on the marks of Predestination, N. 31, p. 130, 14th edition, 'What does it matter, whether by a leap or a flight, provided we enter the city of glory?' as he says again in the same place." "Certainly," I replied, "it is of no importance; but the question is, Do we enter there?" "The Virgin replies for us; you will see it in the concluding words of Père Bauny's book; 'If it should chance in your last moments that the enemy should claim you, and the little internal republic of the mind be troubled, say only, the Blessed Mary shall answer for you; and it is to her that he must

address himself.'” “ But, my Father, if this point were to be pressed further, it might be embarrassing. Who is to assure them that the Virgin thus answers for them ? ” “ Père Bauny,” he rejoined, “ answers for her: ‘ As for the benefit to accrue to you I will be answerable, and will pledge myself for the Holy Mother.’ ” “ But, my good Father, who will be answerable for Père Bauny ? ” “ Who ? ” cried he ; “ why he is a member of our Society ; don’t you know that our Society is answerable for *all* the writings of its members ? You ought to be aware of this—it is important. There is an order of the Society, forbidding all booksellers to publish any work of the Fathers without the *approbation* of the Fraternity’s theologians and the permission of the Superiors : it is a regulation passed by Henry III., dated 10th May, 1583, and confirmed by Henry IV., 20th Dec. 1603, and by Louis XIII., 14th Feb. 1612 ; so that our *whole* body is responsible for the writings of each of our Fathers. This is peculiar to our Order ; and in consequence of this, no works emanate from us but what are imbued with the spirit of the Society. I repeat, it is proper you should be informed of this.” “ You are very obliging, my good Father ; I am only sorry I did not know it before : this information will induce me to pay still more attention to your writers.” “ I should have mentioned it before if I had had an opportunity,” he answered ; “ but you will remember it now : let us resume our subject.

“ I think I have now furnished you with methods of assuring ourselves of our salvation, sufficiently easy, safe, and numerous. But our Fathers have been desirous that we should not rest at this early stage, in which nothing

more is accomplished than just what is strictly necessary for safety. As they unceasingly aim at promoting the glory of God, they endeavour to elevate mankind to the highest degrees of piety. And since worldly persons are usually deterred from habits of devotion, by false ideas, which they have imbibed respecting them, it has been considered of the utmost importance to get rid of this primary obstacle. On this account, the Père Le Moine has acquired a distinguished reputation, by the work he has compiled with this view—‘Devotion made Easy.’ He has here drawn a most delightful picture of pious habits. No one has ever described them so well. Hear the opening words of his work : ‘Virtue has never yet been properly exhibited to the world ; no one has ever justly delineated her. It is not to be wondered at that so few have sought to obtain a resting-place upon her firm foundations. She has been represented as delighting only in gloom and solitude ; her associations have ever been sorrow and toil ; and she has been held out as the enemy of pleasure and amusement, which are the bloom of happiness, and the zest of life.’ You will find the passage at page 92.”

“But, my Father,” I said, “there certainly have been eminent saints, whose lives have been highly austere.” “Doubtless,” said he, “but on the other hand, there have always been, as our author says (page 191), ‘polished saints, and cultivated devotees ;’ and you will find from what is said at p. 86, that the difference in their manners arises merely from diversity of tastes. Listen again : ‘I do not deny that there are always to be found pale and melancholy Pietists, lovers of silence and solitude, phleg-

matic in temperament, and clayey of nature. But there are others also of more joyous dispositions, abounding in warm and convivial tempers, and whose general constitution sympathizes with pleasure.'

" You see by this, that the love of retirement and meditation is not universal with devout persons ; and, as I said, is more the effect of natural temper than of piety. Instead of this, the austere habits of which you speak are rather the characteristics of a savage and misanthropical nature ; and thus you will find them classed with the rude and eccentric manners of melancholy extravagance, in the description which Père Le Moine gives of them in the 7th Book of his Moral Portraits. These are some passages : ' He has no eyes for the beauties of art and nature. He would fancy himself insupportably oppressed, if he allowed any object to yield him pleasure. During festivals he seeks converse with the dead. He has, on such occasions, more satisfaction in concealing himself in the trunk of an old tree, or the shades of a cavern, than in glittering in a palace or on a throne. To affronts and injuries he is as insensible as a statue. The world's honour and glory are idols unknown to and unworshipped by him. Beauty disturbs him like an apparition, and those imperious and despotic forms, those seductive tyrants, who draw all other men in willing bondage, have no more power over him than the sun upon the eyes of the owl ;' &c. &c."

" My reverend Father, believe me, if you had not told me that the Père Le Moine was the author of this portrait, I should have said it was drawn by some ribald infidel, seeking to turn the saints into ridicule. For if

this be not the description of a man detached from all the objects which the gospel enjoins him to renounce, I confess I know nothing about the matter." "You will see then how little you do understand it," he replied; "these are 'marks of a feeble and untutored mind, destitute of the cheerful and natural affections which it ought to possess,' as Père Le Moine says, at the close of his description. It is in this way that he 'teaches virtue and Christian philosophy,' according to the design of the work in question, as explained in the preface. And, in truth, it cannot be denied that this method of inculcating devotion suits the world far better than that which has been hitherto practised." "It is not to be doubted," I said. "And you will see it more clearly still as we proceed. I have only as yet spoken of piety in general; but to show how our Fathers have taken pains to lighten its difficulties, is it not a most comfortable thing for the ambitious to find that they may maintain true devotion, together with an unlimited love of aggrandizement?" "What, my Father!" I exclaimed; "to whatever extreme they may carry it?" "Certainly," he replied; for it would be only a venial sin, unless honours were sought to such a degree as to be offensive to God, or injurious to the state. Now venial offences are not incompatible with devotion, since the greatest saints are not exempt from them. Hear what Escobar says, tr. 2. ex. 2. N. 17. 'Ambition, which is an inordinate desire of office and honours, is in itself a venial sin; but if these honours be sought to the injury of the state, or more properly speaking, to the displeasure of God, these adventitious circumstances render it mortal.'"

“This is certainly very convenient, my Father.” “And again,” he continued, “is not that a consolatory doctrine for the avaricious which is laid down by Escobar, tr. 5, ex. 5, N. 154; ‘I am persuaded that it is not a mortal sin for the rich to omit to give of their superfluity, to relieve the pressing necessities of the poor:’ ‘scio in gravi pauperum necessitate, divites non dando superflua, non peccare mortaliter.’” “Really,” said I, “if this be true, I see clearly that I shall not know whether I have ever committed a sin at all.” “To prove my point still more plainly,” he continued, “would you not think that an inordinate opinion of our merits, and complacency in our works, is a dangerous sin? And would you not be surprized to learn that, even if our self-conceit were quite unfounded, so far from an offence, it is to be regarded as a gift of God?” “Is it possible!” “Indeed it is; and it is thus taught by the famous Père Gurasse, in his work in French, entitled ‘Summary of the chief truths of Religion,’ part 2, p. 419. ‘It is a result of commutative justice, that all honest labour is recompensed either by praise from others, or by self-satisfaction. When men of exalted minds produce some excellent work, they are justly rewarded by the public praise. But when one of humble capacity labours much in the production of something of little value, and beneath the notice of the public; that his labours may not remain without compensation, God confers upon him a feeling of personal satisfaction, which could not be grudged him without the grossest injustice. In this way the impartial beneficence of its Maker gives even to the poor *frog* a kind of satisfaction in its dissonant croak.”

"These are, indeed," I said, "admirable justifications of vanity, ambition, and avarice. And as for envy, my good Father, would it be more difficult to excuse that failing?" "This is a matter of delicacy. We must here resort to the distinction of the Père Bauny in his 'Summary of Sins.' His opinion upon this point, C. 7, p. 123, 5th and 6th Editions, is, 'Envy of the spiritual welfare of another is a mortal sin, but envy of his temporal good is only venial.'" "For what reason, I pray?" "Listen," he said;—"For the good that is found in temporal things is so slender and unimportant, as to be of no consideration with God and the saints." "But, my Father," I rejoined, "if this good is so slight and inconsiderable, how is it that you allow a man's *life* to be taken for its preservation?" "You misconceive me," he replied: "the unimportance is in the sight of God, not of man." "I did not think of that," I rejoined; "all I hope is, that through these distinctions, no mortal sins will be left in the world." "Don't suppose any thing of the kind," the Father said; "there are some sins that are ever mortal in their nature; for instance, indolence."

"Why so, my Father?" I asked.

"Wait a little," he replied; "hear Escobar's definition of this vice, given at tr. 2, ex. 2, N. 81, and you will know why: 'Indolence is a species of sadness, on account of spiritual things being spiritual, in the same way as repining at the sacraments for their being the appointed source of grace; and this is a mortal sin.'" "Well!" I remarked, "I suspect no one will ever be convicted of indolence at this rate." "Therefore," said he, "Escobar remarks, 'I acknowledge that few persons in reality fall into the

guilt of indolence." You see now," the Father continued, "the importance of correct definitions." "Yes, indeed; and I remember also your other definitions, of assassination, ambuscades, and superfluous wealth. But do you not extend this method to other cases, and give definitions, after the same fashion, to every description of vice? By that means, we might enjoy all our pleasures without the commission of sin."

"It is not always necessary," he replied, "to change the definitions of things for that purpose. You will see this illustrated in respect to good eating, which is considered one of the chief pleasures of life, and which Escobar sanctions in this manner in his 'Practice of the Society,' N. 202; 'Is it lawful to eat and drink to satiety, without necessity, and for pleasure alone? Yes, certainly, according to Sanchez, provided health be not injured; because it is allowed to indulge the natural appetites in their proper satisfactions: 'an comedere et bibere usque ad satietatem, *absque necessitate*, ob solam voluptatem, sit peccatum? Cum Sanctio *negativé* respondeo, modo non obsit valetudini, quia licité potest appetitus naturalis suis actibus frui.'" "Truly, my Father," I here exclaimed, "this is the completest passage yet produced, and the most perfect principle in your moral system for the production of convenient practice. So, gluttony is not even a venial offence." "Not in the way I have stated: but it would be venial according to Escobar, N. 56, 'If, without necessity, we were to eat and drink to such a degree as to cause sickness: 'si quis se usque ad vomitum ingurgitet.'

"Enough, however, on this subject," he continued;

“ I will now acquaint you with the facilities we have furnished for avoiding the commission of sin in intercourse with the world, and in matters of pleasure.

“ One of the greatest difficulties people experience, is to avoid falsehood, especially, when it is wished to convey the belief of something untrue. For this purpose, our system of equivocation is admirably adapted; by which ‘ it is allowed to make use of ambiguous expressions, to be understood in a sense different from that in which we use them;’ as is stated by Sanchez, Op. Mor. p. 2, Book 3, Ch. 6, N. 13.” “ I am aware of this,” I said. “ Why yes, we have circulated this doctrine so largely, that every one is acquainted with it. But do you know what ought to be done when you cannot find equivocal terms ? ” “ I cannot say I do.” “ I thought so,” he replied : “ this point is new ; it is the doctrine of ‘ mental reservation.’ Sanchez lays it down in the same place ; ‘ We may swear,’ he says, ‘ that we have not done a certain thing, although we actually have done it ; by an understanding, in our own minds, that it was not done on a *given* day, or before we were *born*, or any similar circumstance, secretly understood, without using any words which may actually be so interpreted : this is convenient in many situations, and is most especially justifiable for the preservation of health, honour, or property.’ ”

“ What ! my Father, and this not falsehood or perjury ! ” “ No,” he replied ; “ Sanchez demonstrates it in the same passage, and Père Filiutius also, tr. 35, Ch. 11, N. 331 ; ‘ for,’ says he, ‘ it is the intention that regulates the quality of the action.’ And at N. 328, he gives another method of avoiding falsehood ; it is, after

saying aloud. 'I swear that I did not do so and so,' to add in a low tone, '*to-day*;' or after saying aloud, 'I swear,' to whisper, 'that I *say*;' and then to continue aloud, 'that I did not do so.' You see clearly that this is saying the truth." "I certainly do," I replied; "or at least it is saying the truth 'in a whisper,' and a lie 'aloud.'" But may it not be feared that all persons might not have sufficient presence of mind to avail themselves of these methods?" "Our Fathers," he said, "have provided for the case of such, that it is enough to avoid a lie, to say simply 'they have *not* done' that which they really have done, provided they have a general intention of using the words in a sense which more expert persons would give them."

"Now confess," the Father continued, "that you have been often in situations of difficulty for want of knowing all this?" "Occasionally," I replied. "And do you not allow that it would be then highly convenient to have a conscientious dispensation from keeping your word?" "The greatest convenience in the world." "Then hear the general rule laid down by Escobar, tr. 3, ex. 3, N. 48; 'Promises are not obligatory, when we do not intend to bind ourselves in making them. Now we never can be held to have such an intention, unless we confirm it by an oath or an agreement; to wit, when we say simply 'I will do so,' we mean unless we *change* our mind; for no one ought to have his free-will fettered.' He gives other cases which you can see for yourself, and concludes, 'All this is taken from Molina and our other authorities: 'Omnia ex *Molina* et aliis.' And so no doubt can remain on the subject."

"Well! my excellent Father," I exclaimed, "I certainly did not know till now that our private intention had the power to invalidate our promises." "You see now, however," he rejoined, "its extreme advantage in our commerce with the world. But what has given us the most labour has been to regulate the communications between the sexes; for our Fathers are highly rigid on the subject of modesty. Not that they do not entertain certain delicate questions, and with sufficient indulgence."

It was now, my friend, that I learnt from him some of the most extraordinary cases that can be imagined, and enough to fill several letters: but I shall content myself with noting the quotations, for you show my letters to every one, and I should not wish that such topics should be turned into mere matter of amusement.

The only thing I can mark for you of what he showed me in these works (even such as were in *French*) is what you will find in the 'Summary of Offences,' by Père Bauny, p. 165, on certain intimacies; which he explains (provided the intention be properly regulated) as merely supporting the character of a man of pleasure;* and you will be surprised to find at p. 148, a principle of morality respecting the right, which he alleges is possessed by daughters, to dispose of their persons, without the consent of their parents. These are his words; "When this takes place with the free-will of the daughter, although the father may lament it, it cannot be maintained that the said daughter, or he who has seduced her, has done such father an injury, or violated, in respect of him, the rules

* 'Comme à passer pour galant.' (Fr.)

of justice ; for the daughter is owner of her own person, and may do as she will with it, short of death or the excision of any of her limbs." You may judge from this specimen of the nature of the rest.

I called to mind, here, a passage from a heathen poet on this subject, who shows himself a better casuist than these Fathers. "The person of a daughter is not wholly her own ; one part belongs to her father, and one to her mother ; and without their consent she has no power over herself, not even in regard to marriage." And I doubt whether any judge could be found, who would not uphold, as law, the very opposite of Père Bauny's position.

This is all that I can allow myself to report of these communications, which lasted so *long*, that I was obliged to request the conversation might be changed. He did so, and then apprized me of their rules for the adjustment of female dress : "We are not referring here," he said, "to such as entertain immodest designs, but to a different class of females ; and Escobar says, tr. 1, ex. 8, N. 5 ; 'If dress be indulged in, not with any ill intention, but merely from a natural inclination to vanity—' *ob naturalem fastidii inclinationem*'—it is 'either a venial sin, or no sin at all.' And Père Bauny, in his 'Summary of Sins,' ch. 46, p. 1094, says, 'Even if a female be aware of the dangerous effect both to the body and soul of beholders, by her elaborate style of dress, decked with rich and elegant attire, she commits no sin in practising it.' And he quotes, among others, Père Sanchez, as holding the same opinion."

"But, my Father," I asked, "what do your authorities say to those passages of Scripture which censure so

strongly the least indulgence of this kind?" * "Læsius," he answered, "has very acutely settled that point, De Just. Book 4, C. 4, d. 14, N. 114, in what follows: 'Those passages of Scripture were only intended as directions to the females of that particular period, that their modesty might set an edifying example to the heathen.' " "And where does he find this?" "No matter where he finds it," was the reply; "it is sufficient that the opinions of these great men have always 'probability' on their side. However the Père Le Plaine has somewhat modified the general permission; for he is by no means willing to extend it to the old; you will find this, he says, in his 'Easy Devotion,' among other places, at pp. 127, 157, and 163; 'In youth,' he says, 'dress is natural and allowable; it becomes that period, which is the flower and spring-time of our years. But *there* must be its limit; roses are unseasonable upon snow. It is only the bright luminaries of fashion that should perpetually blaze in the ball-room—gay beings that seem endowed with the gift of perpetual youth. The best thing to be done, as years advance, is to take counsel of reason, and our *looking-glass*; to yield to decorum, and necessity; and to retire from observation, as the shades of night approach.' " "That is certainly judicious," I remarked. "But," continued he, "that you may see how our Fathers have extended their solitudes to all cases, I must tell you that, as they give permission to females to play, and yet, remembered, that in many instances the license would be useless unless they furnished them also with necessary

* Isaiah iii. 16. 1 Peter iii. 3, &c.

means, they have laid down another rule in their favor, as you will see in Escobar, Ch. du Luvein, tr. 1, ex. 91, N. 13. 'A woman,' he says, 'may play, and may appropriate for the purpose, her husband's money.' "

"Admirable again!" I exclaimed. "Yes, and there are many other things still; but we must pass them over, to mention some maxims of yet more importance, for facilitating the performance of holy offices; as, for example, the manner of joining in the Mass. Our great theologian, Gaspard Hurtado, de Sacr. Vol. 2, d. 5, dist. 2, and Conineh. G. 83, a. 6, N. 197, have taught on this point, 'That it is sufficient, at the mass, to be present with the body, though we be absent in spirit, provided we preserve a deportment extremely respectful.' And Vasquez goes still farther; for he says that the injunction to hear mass is 'fulfilled, even if there be no intention to take any part in it.' This is also in Escobar, tr. 1, ex. 11. N. 74 and 107, and again tr. 1, ex. 1, N. 116, where he elucidates the point by the case of 'those who are taken to mass by force, and go with an express intention not to listen to it.' " "Really," I replied, "I should not have believed this, if any but yourself had told me." "I confess," he rejoined, "this matter does somewhat need the authority of such great names; as also where Escobar says in tr. 1, ex. 11, N. 31. 'An objectionable motive, such as *'aspi-ciendi libidinose fœminas,'* together with the pleasure of hearing the service well performed, does not invalidate the duty of attendance.'

"But there is something yet more indulgent in the sagacious Turrianus, Selec. p. 2, d. 16, dub. 7. 'A person may hear the half of a mass from one priest and

afterwards the remaining half from another; and may even hear first the end of one, and then the commencement of another.' And I can tell you further, that it is allowed 'to hear two halves of a mass at the same time from two different priests, if one is beginning the mass when the second is at the elevation; because we can attend to these two divisions at once, and two moities compose a whole,—' *duæ medietates unam missam constituent.*' This is decided by our Fathers Bauny, tr. 6, g. 9, p. 312, Hurtado De Sacr. t. 2, De Missa, d. 5, diff. 4, Azorius, p. 1, B. 7, Cap. 3, g. 3, Escobar, tr. 1, ex. 11, p. 73, in the Chap., 'On the performance of Mass by the Rules of our Society.' And you will see the deductions from it in the same work, Lyons Edition of 1644 and 1646, as follows: 'From this I conclude that the mass may be heard in a very short space of time; as for example, if you happen to find four masses going on at once, so adjusted that when one is commencing, another shall be at the Gospel, a third at the consecration, and the fourth at the communion.' " "Certainly, my Father," I remarked, "at Notre Dame we may get through the mass in an instant by this method." "You must allow then," he said, "that nothing can be done better for facilitating attendance at the service."

"But I must now show you how greatly the sacraments have been mitigated, and especially that of penance; for it is there you will find the crowning proof of the indulgence of our Fathers; and you will be surprised to learn with what prudence they have tempered a system of devotion which has challenged the astonishment of the world. So that, having driven away the terrors which

demons had placed at her entrance, they have rendered her paths more attractive than those of vice, more facile than pleasure; and thus 'a life of well-doing becomes incomparably less irksome than one of evil,' to use the language of the Père Le Moine, pp. 244 and 291, in his 'Devotion made Easy.' Is not that a wonderful transformation?"

"In truth, my good Father," I here interposed, "I must now tell you plainly my opinion. I am afraid that, after all, your methods are bad, and these indulgences are calculated rather to disgust the world than to attract. As to the Mass, for instance, holy and sublime as that service is, would it not be sufficient to destroy all belief in the spirituality of mind of your authors, to hear them thus speak of its solemnities?" "That may be true, in regard to some; but do you not know that our aim is to accommodate ourselves to all sorts of persons! You seem to have lost your memory, so often as I have mentioned this. I must go into this part again the first leisure opportunity; and we will defer till then our communications on the mitigations of the confessional. I will explain the whole so thoroughly, that you shall not forget it again."

We here separated; and I suppose our next conversation will be upon this branch of their policy. I remain, &c.

LETTER X.*

MITIGATIONS INTRODUCED BY THE JESUITS IN THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE, BY THEIR MAXIMS RESPECTING CONFESSION, SATISFACTION, ABSOLUTION, PROXIMATE OCCASIONS OF SIN, CONTRITION, AND THE LOVE OF GOD.

SIR,

Paris, August 2, 1656.

THE subject of this communication is not the general policy of the Society, but it is one of its grand principles. You are now to learn the mitigations of the confessional ; which are assuredly the best means that these professors could have employed for attracting all sorts of persons, at the same time that they refuse none. It was necessary to premise this point, before proceeding further, and with this view the Father thought proper to commence his discourse as follows.

“ You have perceived, from all that I have hitherto stated, how successfully our Fathers have laboured (through their superiority of intelligence) in proving the lawfulness of many things which had hitherto passed for forbidden. But since, after all, there will remain many species of

* This letter was composed in conjunction with M. Arnauld.—Ed.

offences, which cannot be thus extenuated; and the sole remedy for which is in confession, it has become especially necessary to soften the difficulties of that office, by the methods which I have now to unfold. And thus, having in our previous conversation shown how many scruples, by which the conscience was wont to be troubled, were allayed, by proving that what had been supposed to be criminal was in reality not so; it remains now to explain the methods, by which that which is really sinful may be easily expiated, in rendering the confessional less formidable than heretofore." "And what are these methods, I pray?" "They are," he said, "those admirable subtleties peculiar to our Society, which our Flemish Fathers, in the 'Portraiture of our First Century,' Book 3, or. 1, p. 405, and Book 3, ch. 2, call 'pious and holy artifices, and a sacred scheme of devotion:—*piam et religiosam calliditatem, et pietatis solertiam*:' Book 3, ch. 8. It is by means of these contrivances that 'crimes are now absolved (*alacrius*) with more ease and promptitude, than heretofore they were committed; so that multitudes now get their offences absolved as speedily as they were contracted:—*plurimi vix citius maculas contrahunt, quam eluunt*:' as is stated in the same part." "Pray, my Father, let me hear those most salutary 'finesses.'" "They are numerous," he continued; "for, as the confessional witnesses many painful things, the alleviations in question have been applied to all. And as the distress experienced on such occasions consists chiefly in the shame of acknowledging certain offences, the difficulty in describing their circumstantial, the penances that should ensue, the resolutions not to offend again, the frequent breach of such

resolutions, and the consequent compunction; I hope I shall succeed in showing you that scarcely any thing painful has been left in all these things; such has been the care to divest of bitterness and distaste this most troublesome remedy for sin.

“Now, to begin with the pain experienced in the confession of certain offences: as you must be aware how important it is to retain the good opinion of our confessor — ‘*uti bonam famam apud ordinarium tueatur*’ — is it not a most comfortable thing, with this view, to be allowed — as our Fathers decide, and Escobar among others, who cites also Suarez, tr. 7, c. 4, N. 135 — ‘to have *two* confessors; one for mortal, and the other for venial sins; provided, however, that we take not occasion from thence to continue in the practice of mortal sins?’ And he then gives another ingenious method for confessing an offence even to one’s regular confessor, without letting it be known that it was committed subsequent to the last confession. ‘It is,’ he says, ‘to make a general confession, and to mix up the last committed offence with those of which we accuse ourselves in the gross.’ He says the same thing again, Princ. ex. 2, N. 73. And I am sure you will admit that this decision of Père Bauny, Theol. Mor. tr. 4. q. 15. p. 137, tends still more to mitigate the shame of confessing our lapses; ‘With the exception of a few rare occasions, the confessor has no right to inquire whether the sin be a habitual one; nor are we bound to make such an acknowledgment; since he ought not to cause his penitent the shame of avowing frequent offences.’”

“Indeed! my Father: why I should as soon say, a

physician ought not to ask his patient whether he has long suffered from a fever. Do not all kinds of sin differ according to the different circumstances under which they are committed? And ought not the object of a true penitent be to lay open the state of his conscience to his confessor, with the same sincerity and unreservedness, as if he were conversing with his Saviour, of whom the priest is the representative? And can anything be more opposed to such a disposition, than to conceal the frequency of our falls, in order to extenuate our guilt?"

I saw the good Father was embarrassed by this remark; so he endeavoured, this time, rather to elude the difficulty I had placed him in, than to reply to it, by passing on to another of their regulations. This, however, only authorized a new evil, without in any measure justifying the former; and laid down what I consider to be one of their most pernicious principles, and one especially calculated to confirm the vicious in their evil courses. "I by no means deny," he said, "that habit tends to increase the malignity of sin; but it does not change its nature; and therefore we are not under an obligation to make confession of it, according to the ordinances of our Society, as reported by Escobar, *Princ. ex. 2, n. 39*; 'We are only bound,' he writes, 'to make confession of those circumstances which change the nature of the offence, but not of such as cause an aggravation of it.'"

"In pursuance of this regulation, our Father Granados says, in his 5th Part, *Cont. 7, vol. 9, d. 9, n. 22*, 'If a man eats meat in Lent, it is sufficient to acknowledge he has violated a fast, without saying whether he has eaten meat, or indulged in two slight meals.' So, according to

Père Reginaldus, tr. 1, B. 6, C. 4, n. 114, ‘A cunning man, who has practised the black art, is not bound to confess that fact; but it is enough to say he has practised divination, without acknowledging whether it was by palmistry, or by dealing with the devil.’ And Fagandez, a member of our order, also says, p. 2, B. 4, c. 3, n. 17; ‘It is not obligatory to confess an intrigue, when both parties have been consenting to it.’ Our Father Escobar records all this in the same place, n. 41, 61, 62, together with various other curious cases, in which it is held that confession is not incumbent; you may see them yourself in the passages I have referred to.” “These are indeed,” I remarked, “devotional artifices, of a most accommodating nature!”

“Yet,” he continued, “all this would be nothing without the mitigations of ‘penance’ introduced by the Brethren; that being obviously still more distasteful even than confession. But now, the most sensitive have no cause of fear, when they find, as is laid down in our Theses of Clermont College; ‘If the confessors impose a suitable penance (*convenientem*); and a person be notwithstanding unwilling to submit to it, he may withdraw from the same, by renouncing both the *absolution* and the penance together.’ And Escobar says, in his ‘Practice of Penance, according to our Society,’ tr. 7, ex. 4, n. 188; ‘If the party confessing shall declare that he is willing to postpone the penance till the *next* world, and to suffer in purgatory all the penalties he has incurred here, the confessor may impose upon him some very light penance, by which the form of the sacrament may be maintained; especially if he should see that no severe infliction would be sub-

mitted to." "I should think," I said, "if this be the case, it must no longer be called 'the Sacrament of Penance.'" "That is a mistake; something is always inflicted, if only for form's sake." "But, my good Father," I asked, "do you think a person is entitled to absolution, who will submit to nothing that shall give him pain, to procure the expiation of his sins? And when men are in that state of mind, ought you not rather to retain their offences than to remit them? Do you entertain a just view of the powers of your ministry; and that it is committed to you to bind as well as to loose? And can you believe that you are permitted to give absolution, indiscriminately, to all who shall ask it, without considering whether Christ will absolve in heaven those whom you absolve on earth?" "What!" said the Father, "do you suppose we are not aware that the confessor is to judge of the disposition of the penitent; both because he is bound not to dispense the sacraments to the unworthy (Jesus Christ having enjoined him to be faithful, and not give that which is holy to the dogs), and, because a judge is bound to judge righteously, loosing those who are worthy, and binding the sinful; and therefore he cannot absolve those whom Christ condemns." "Where do you get that passage from?" I asked. "From our Père Filiutius," he replied; "tr. 1, t. 7, n. 354." "You surprise me," I said; "I should have supposed it had been from one of the ancient Fathers of the Church. But surely such language as that ought to startle your confessors, and render them more careful to ascertain, in dispensing this sacrament, that the contrition of their penitents is sincere, and their promises of amendment to be depended upon."

“ There is no difficulty on that head,” he replied : “ Filiutius has taken care not to cause such embarrassment to confessors, and has directed the following method for their relief : ‘ A confessor may easily relieve himself from anxiety respecting his penitent’s state of mind ; for if he should not give sufficient proof of compunction, he has only to ask, if he very sincerely abhors the sin ; and his answer being in the affirmative, he is bound to believe it. The same may be said of resolutions for the future, unless there should be some restitution to be made, or some proximate occasion of sin to be discontinued.’ ” “ That passage is clearly from Filiutius,” I said. “ You are mistaken,” replied the Father, “ the whole is taken by him, word by word, from Suarez, 3 Part, t. 4, disp. 32, sect. 2, n. 2.” “ But the words last quoted contradict the former ; for confessors will be unable to judge of the state of mind of their penitents, if they are bound to accept this mere affirmation, unsupported by any actual proofs of contrition. Is there such certainty then in mere words ? I doubt much whether the past experience of your Fathers will induce them to put faith in such promises ; but rather to expect the very opposite results.” “ That is of no importance ; they are *bound* to yield their belief : Père Bauny, who has treated this point most profoundly, in his ‘ Summary of Offences,’ c. 46, p. 1090, 2, thus concludes : ‘ Persons falling repeatedly into sin, and exhibiting no signs of amendment, yet, presenting themselves to their confessor, and expressing regret for the past, together with good intentions for the future, are still to be believed, although it may be feared their assurances do not go far beyond the lips. And, even if they

afterwards give themselves more license than ever in the same kind of offences, they ought still, in my opinion, to receive absolution.' Now, I think all your doubts must be satisfied."

"But, my good Father," I rejoined, "you surely impose a heavy responsibility upon your confessors, in obliging them to give credit to the very opposite of what their senses testify?" "You do not clearly see the point," he replied; "all they mean is, that they are to act—to absolve—as if they believed the resolutions were sincere and decided, although they may not in reality believe them to be any such thing. This is subsequently explained both by Filiutius and Suarez. After saying, that the priest is bound to credit his penitent on his word, they add: 'It is not incumbent upon the confessor to have any belief or even probable expectation of the fulfilment of the resolutions: it is sufficient that he thinks there is at the moment a general intention to amend, although he may expect him to relapse into sin very shortly.' And this is the doctrine of all our authorities—'ita docent omnes Auctores.' Can you any longer entertain doubt upon a point in which all our authorities agree?"

"But, my Father, what becomes of that position maintained by the Père Pétau himself, in the Preface to his Pen. pall, p. 4, that 'the holy Fathers, the Doctors, and the Councils, are all agreed (as in an incontrovertible truth) that the penitence which prepares for the Eucharist should be sincere, decided, bold; not feeble or indolent, not subject to inconstancy and relapse?'" "Do you not see," he replied, "that the Père Pétau is speaking

there of the ancient Church? All that is now so 'out of date,' to use the words of our Fathers, that, according to Père Bauny, the very opposite is really held to be the truth: you will find it at tr. 4, q. 15, p. 95; 'There are some writers who affirm that absolution ought to be refused to those who often relapse into the same offences; and especially when, after frequent remission, there still seems no improvement; but others say the contrary. Now the true doctrine is, that absolution is not to be refused to such persons; and that, even if they have disregarded oft-repeated admonition; if they have violated frequent promises of amendment; if they have taken no pains to improve: whatever others say, the true practice, and that which ought to be followed, is, that in all such cases, absolution is still to be granted.' And in tr. 4, q. 22, p. 100; 'We must not refuse, nor defer to grant absolution to such as are living in habitual sin, be it against the law of God, of nature, and of the Church; and even if we see no hope of amendment—etsi emendationis futuræ nulla spes appareat.' "

"But surely the certainty of procuring absolution tends to the encouragement of sin." "I understand you," the Father said; "but hear what Père Bauny says, q. 15: 'We may absolve a person, who acknowledges that the hope of absolution has led him to sin with less restraint than if he had not had such hope.' And Père Caussin, defending that proposition, says, at page 211 of his Rep. on Theol. Mor. 'If this were not allowed, the benefit of absolution would be interdicted to the great majority of persons; and no resource would be left to sinners but a bough and a rope.' "

"I see plainly," I here remarked, "that these doctrines must prove sufficiently effective in filling your confessionals." "So much so," he said, "that you can scarcely conceive the numbers that resort to us; 'we are as it were overwhelmed and oppressed by the crowd of penitents; 'pœnitentium numero obruimur,' as is remarked in the 'Image de notre premier Siècle, Book 3, ch. 8.'" "I know," I said, "one very simple way of relieving the pressure. It is nothing more than to compel the offenders to desist from the proximate occasion of their sins; * you would find this easy method afford you sensible relief." "We do not aim at any thing of the kind," he replied: "on the contrary, as is said in the same work, B. 3, ch. 7, p. 374, 'Our Society labours to strengthen virtue, to war against vice, and to save countless numbers of souls.' And as there are few who are willing to quit these 'proximate occasions,' it has become necessary to define in what they consist; as may be seen in Escobar, or the 'Pratique' of our Society, tr. 7, ex. 4, N. 226: 'That is not to be understood as a 'proximate occasion,' when a person falls into sin on rare occasions; as, for instance, by sudden irritation against an inmate in his dwelling three or four times in a year; ' or, according to Père Bauny, in his French work, 'once or twice in the course of a month,' p. 1082, and again, p. 1089, where he asks, 'What is to be done in the case of masters and servants, or near relatives living together, who provoke each other to mutual irritation? They ought to be separated, I maintain.' He goes on to say, the same, 'if

* 'Quitter les occasions prochaines.' (Fr.)

their altercations are frequent and almost daily; but if the cause of offence occur seldom, perhaps not more than once or twice a month, and if they cannot separate without much inconvenience and detriment, then they may be absolved, according to these authorities, and among others, Saurez; provided they promise to offend no more, and testify regret for the past.' Nay, the Père Bauny, (he continued) allows those who have fallen into subsequent offences, 'to continue in their practice, if they should be unable to relinquish them without giving occasion of animadversion on the part of others, or suffering personal inconvenience.' And he says the same thing in his 'Moral Theology, tr. 4, de Pœnit. q. 13, p. 93, and q. 14, p. 95. 'It is both allowable and incumbent, to give absolution to a female, living in a habit of sin,—' Si non potest honesté ejicere, aut habeat aliquam causam retinendi,'— provided always that she entertains an intention ultimately to reform."

"It must be acknowledged," I remarked, "that the intention to reform is much alleviated in its rigour, when we are absolved from the obligation, on its causing us inconvenience. But I suppose the duty is enforced by the rules of your Society, when no such inconvenience is incurred?" "Why, yes," was the reply; "although not without exception. Père Bauny remarks, under the same head, 'It is lawful for all persons to resort to disreputable places, with a view to the conversion of the abandoned, although they may be in danger of yielding to temptation; and even if they be conscious that they have *before* fallen into it. And although some of our brethren dissent from this opinion, and hold that it is not lawful voluntarily to

endanger our own salvation for the benefit of others, I most cordially embrace the opposite view of the case.’”

“These are certainly a new class of religionists,” I said; “but on what ground, I pray, does Père Bauny give this questionable licence?” “It is on that principle,” he replied, “which he afterwards lays down on the authority of Basil Ponce; I have referred to it before; you cannot but remember it: it is, ‘that it is lawful to seek occasion directly and immediately—*primò et per se*—for promoting the spiritual and the temporal good, both of ourselves, and of our neighbours.’”

These passages filled me with such disgust that I was tempted at this point to break off our communication; but I refrained, that he might bring his discourse to an end, and merely said “How, I pray, does this doctrine consist with that of the Gospel, which commands us to shut our eyes, and do violence to ourselves in every thing which may interfere with our salvation? And how is it conceivable, that a man, who voluntarily exposes himself to occasions of sin, is sincere in his hatred of it? Is it not on the contrary, obvious, that he is not duly impressed with its evils, and has not experienced that change of heart which produces love to God as well as benevolence to man?”

“Ah!” the Father exclaimed, “there you come to actual penitence. You seem not to be aware of the views of Père Pintereau, in the Second Part of his *Abbé de Boisie*, p. 50. ‘All our Fathers agree,’ he says, ‘that it is error, and almost heresy, to say that penitence is necessary; and that regret* alone, even if founded on no

* ‘Attrition.’ (Fr.)

other motive than the fear of hell, independently of the inclinations of the offender, is not sufficient with the holy sacrament.' ” “ Indeed ! my Father, so it is almost an article of faith that regret for sin, from a mere dread of its penalties, is available, when combined with the sacrament : I apprehend this view must be peculiar to your fraternity. For there are others who, though they hold that regret for sin, with the sacrament, is sufficient, require that at least it should be attended with some measure of love to God. Besides which, it seems to me that even your authorities did not formerly hold this doctrine so implicitly ; for your own Père Suarez has this language on the question in his ‘ De Pœn.’ q. 90, art. 4, disp. 15, Sec. 4, N. 17. ‘ Although it may be probable that ‘ regret ’ for sin is sufficient with the sacrament, it is not absolutely certain, but may be an erroneous opinion ; ‘ non est certa, et potest esse falsa.’ And if it be erroneous, then the regret in question does not suffice for salvation ; and the man who wittingly dies in that state, exposes himself voluntarily to the mortal peril of eternal damnation. For the opinion referred to is not founded on antiquity, nor is it one very commonly received ; ‘ nec valde antiqua, nec multum communis.’ Neither does Sanchez seem to regard it as authentic, as he says in his Sum. B. 1. ch. 9, N. 34, ‘ A sick person, as well as his confessor, would be guilty of mortal sin, in acting upon the persuasion that ‘ regret ’ for sin with the sacrament would be sufficient for salvation, seeing the great peril of eternal welfare to which the penitent would be exposed, if such opinion should prove unfounded.’ So also Comitulus says, Resp. Mor. B. 1, q. 32, N. 7, 8. ‘ It is by no

means certain that 'regret' for sin, with the sacrament, suffices.' "

The worthy Father here interrupted me. "What then! you read our authors? That is all right; but it would be still better if you were to read them with a member of the Society. Don't you perceive, that in consequence of having read them alone, you have concluded that these passages tend to cast reflections upon those who now maintain our doctrines of 'Regret? Instead of which it might have been proved to you that nothing can be more confirmatory of them. For what an honour is it to our modern authorities to have so universally disseminated their opinions, that, with the exception of mere theologians, there is scarcely any one who does not believe that the view we now take of the doctrine in question is that which has been held by the Church from time immemorial. And thus, if you succeed in proving even from our own Fathers, that until within these few years the opinion was an uncertain one, what do you do but confer additional honours upon the modern writers, for their acuteness in having now established it?

"Thus Diana, with whom we are both now so familiar, has given an interesting account of the steps by which he has arrived at his conclusions. See p. 5, tr. 13. He says, 'Formerly the scholastics used to maintain, that penitence was necessary after the commission of mortal sin: afterwards, that it was only required on saints' days, or when some public calamity was impending; and, according to others, it might not be deferred when we seemed to be drawing near to death. But our Fathers Rastado and Vasquez have conclusively refuted all these

opinions, and have decided ‘that it is only necessary when there is no other way of procuring absolution, as in the Article of Death.’ But to show you further the surprizing progress this doctrine has made, I will just add the following passages from Fagundes, præc. 2, t. 11, ch. 4, N. 13; Granados in part 3, Contr. 7, d. 3, Sec. 4, N. 19. ‘Penitence* is not necessary even at death; for if regret† with the Sacrament is not sufficient at the hour of death, it would follow that regret with the Sacrament is not efficacious in itself.’ The same sentiment is expressed by Escobar in his ‘Practice of our Society.’ And Père F. Launy repeats the same proposition, tr. 8, disp. 3, N. 13.”

“You astonish me!” I said: “I see in this regret for sin which you speak of, nothing but a natural emotion; and thus a sinner may entitle himself to absolution, altogether independently of divine influence. Now this, it is well known, is denounced by the Councils as heresy.” “I might have thought as you do,” the Father replied; “yet it is clear that the contrary is the case; for our Fathers, who belong to the College of Clermont, have expressly maintained in their Theses of the 23d May and 6 June 1644, Col. 4, N. 1, that ‘regret for sin may be devout, and sufficient for the receiving of the Sacrament, although not of a supernatural nature.’ And in that of the month of August 1643, ‘Regret, although nothing more than a natural emotion, is sufficient, if sincere, for the receiving the Sacrament.’ ‘Ad Sacramentum sufficit attritio naturalis, modo honesta.’ This now is surely enough upon the point, excepting indeed, what

* ‘Contrition.’ (Fr.)

† ‘Attrition.’ (Fr.)

results as a natural consequence from the principle here laid down, viz. that penitence is so little necessary to the Sacrament that it might, on the contrary, be positively injurious; insomuch that (it possessing an efficacy to efface sin in itself) it leaves nothing to be done by the Sacrament. This is the view of our Father Valentia, the celebrated Jesuit, t. 44, disp. 7, q. 8, p. 4. 'Contrition is by no means necessary for obtaining the most important results of the Sacrament, but on the contrary, it is rather an obstacle.' 'Imo obstat potius, quominus effectus sequatur.' Nothing stronger can be wished for in favour of 'Regret.'" "I believe you, my dear Father," I said; "but suffer me to make one remark, and to show you the extremes to which your doctrine may lead. When you say that sorrow, arising merely from fear of punishment, is sufficient, in conjunction with the Sacrament, for the salvation of a sinner, does it not follow from thence, that a man may have been all his life making this sort of expiation for sin, and attain to salvation at last, without having ever experienced a genuine and influential love of his Maker? Would your Fathers dare to maintain such a position as that?"

"I see from that remark," replied the Father, "that you require to be informed of the doctrine held by our Society respecting the 'love of God.' It is the final article in their Moral system, and the most important of all. You might indeed have gathered some hints of it from the passages that have been quoted upon the last topic: but there are some others more expressly bearing upon the subject. Do not interrupt me, for they are highly interesting.

“Hear now the sentiments of Escobar, who condenses the several opinions of our greatest authors on the subject, in his ‘Practical treatise on the Love of God, as held by our Society, tr. 1, ex. 2, N. 21; and tr. 5, ex. 4, N. 8. ‘When is it necessary for us really to possess love to God? Suarez says, it is sufficient if it be at some period before death, without designating a time; Vasquez, that it is sufficient in the article of death; others, at the period of baptism; others, when we are compelled to do penance; others, finally, on festivals. But the Père Castro Paulo opposes all these opinions, and on good grounds—‘merito.’ Hurtado de Mendoza affirms that the duty is obligatory upon us once every year; and that we are indulgently treated, if not required to practice it more frequently; Père Conink holds, that it is required every three or four years; Henriquez, every five years; and Filiutius says, *it is probable* that a period of five years is somewhat rigorous.’” “What then is his period?” Why, he leaves it to the wise to decide.”

I still compelled myself to abstain from comment upon this indecent trifling, these impious jests, in which man has dared to indulge on the sacred theme of love to his God! “But,” the Father continued, “the great Anthony Sumond, who deals so triumphantly with this subject in his admirable work ‘On the Defence of Virtue,’ and in which he addresses (as he informs his readers) *French* to the *French*, has this language, tr. 2, Sec. 1, p. 12, 13, 14, &c., St. Thomas says ‘we ought to commence the cultivation of love to God immediately on coming to years of reason;’ this is somewhat early. Scotus says it should be every Sunday; how is that proved? Others, at times

of grievous temptation: true, if there be no other way of escaping the temptation. Sotus holds it to be when we receive some especial benefit at God's hand: good; be it for the purpose of showing our gratitude. Others again affirm that it ought to be at the time of death: that is very late. Neither am I more disposed to think it should be at every time of the reception of a Sacrament: concern* for sin is then sufficient, together with confession, if convenient. Suarez declares there is a time for it: but what is that time? He leaves you to decide; he does not pretend to judge. Then what so learned a man does not know, neither can I tell.'—And he concludes the whole by saying, that we are not, in strictness, bound to any thing more than to keep the other commandments, without aspiring after love to God, or aiming to give our heart to him; provided, however, we do not entertain any hatred to him. This he establishes in his 'Second Tract;' you will find the sentiment running through every page, but especially at 16, 19, 24, 28, where he has such expressions as these; 'God, when he commands us to love him, requires us only to obey his other commandments. If he had said, 'However complete be your obedience, you cannot be saved unless your heart be given to me, would this motive, in your opinion, have been commensurate with the object which God had in view? Then, it is said, we shall show our love to God in performing his will, in the same way as if we had a real affection—as if the force of love constrained us. If that be really the case, well and good; if not, let us not the less apply ourselves to strict obedience in good works; seeing that, through the good-

* 'Attrition.' (Fr.)

ness of God, the obligation we are laid under is not so much to love, as *not* to hate him?

“It is in this way that our Fathers have relieved men from the penal obligation actually to love God; and this doctrine is so comfortable, that Pères Aunat, Pintereau, Le Moine and A. Simond have vigorously defended it, when attacked. You have only to look to their replies to the ‘Moral Theology;’ and that of Père Pintereau, 2d Part of the Abbé de Boisee, p. 53, will enable you to judge of the value of this *dispensation*, by the price which he says it has cost—that of the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the master-piece of the doctrine. You will see from these passages, that the dispensation from the irksome obligation to the love of God is the privilege which the Gospel dispensation possesses over the Judaical. ‘It is only reasonable,’ he says, “that in the Law of grace, under the New Testament, the Lord should waive the severe and difficult obligation which existed under the legal system, of exercising complete penitence for obtaining justification; and that the more *lenient* initiation of the Sacraments should have been substituted. Otherwise, Christians, who have succeeded to the place of children, would enjoy no more advantages in the possession of their heavenly parent’s favour, than the Jews of old, who were mere slaves, suing for pity of their Lord.’”

“Father!” I here exclaimed, “my patience is exhausted; I can listen no longer to your detestable statements.” “They are not my *own*,” he replied. “I know they are not,” I said; “but you repudiate them not—you hold not their authors in abhorrence, but regard them

with complacency ! Have you no fear, lest acquiescence in such views may render you a partaker of their guilt ? Know you not that St. Paul holds to be worthy of death, not only the authors of evil, but those who consent to it also ? Is it not enough, that, by your fatal palliatives, you allow so much that is forbidden, but you must also allure and prompt to the commission of crimes (crimes, which even yourselves dare not excuse) by the facility of your absolutions—annihilating, for this purpose, all freedom of will in the priest, and compelling him, as a slave rather than a judge, to give remission to the most inveterate offenders ! And all this, without alteration of conduct—without any other sign of compunction, than promises a hundred times broken—without penance, ‘if they be not disposed to undergo it’—without abandoning their vices, ‘if it cause them inconvenience to do so !’

“ But I pass on. The freedoms taken by your Society with the most sacred rules of Christian duty, lead to the overthrow of the entire Law of God. They violate the great commandment, on which hang all the law and the prophets. They pervert the very principle of piety in the heart ; they take from it all spirit and vitality ; they proclaim, that love to God is not needful for salvation ; and dare to assert, that the remission of this sacred principle is a benefit which the religion of Jesus has conferred upon the world. Impiety can go no further ! The blood of Christ has flowed forth to purchase a dispensation from the obligation to love him ! Before the mystery of incarnation was revealed, love to God was imperative ; now, when ‘ God has so loved the world, that he has given his only-begotten Son for it,’ the world—purchased

by that love—is discharged from the sacred duty! Oh, marvellous theology of modern days! To presume to reverse the anathema pronounced by St. Paul against those who ‘love *not* the Lord Jesus Christ!’ To contradict the assertion of St. John, ‘that whoso loveth not, is dead;’ and the declaration of Christ himself, that “he who loveth not, keepeth not his commandments!” You would confer a title to the enjoyment of God, throughout eternity, upon those who never owned an emotion of love to Him in life! The mystery of iniquity is accomplished. Open, open your eyes, my Father; and, if you have really remained unmoved by all the preceding sophistries of your casuists, let these closing enormities awaken you! I fervently desire it, on behalf both of yourself and your brethren; and I pray to God to reveal to you the horrors of the precipice to which a delusive light has led you; and to fill with his love the hearts of those, who have dared to excuse and absolve the absence of it in their fellow-men!”

After some further remarks of the same nature, I parted from the Father; and we shall probably never meet again. But this need be no cause of concern; for if it should be necessary for me further to communicate with you upon their system, I have made myself so thoroughly acquainted with their writings, that I shall be able to furnish you with as much of their moral principles, and perhaps somewhat more of their polity, than they themselves would be desirous should be made public.—I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XI.

TO THE REVEREND THE FATHERS OF THE
SOCIETY OF JESUS.

ERRORS OF A RIDICULOUS NATURE MAY BE 'REFUTED
BY RAILLERY. RESERVATIONS TO BE OBSERVED IN
ITS USE, WHICH HAVE BEEN OBSERVED BY MON-
TALTE,* BUT HAVE BEEN DISREGARDED BY THE
JESUIT WRITERS. IMPIOUS BUFFOONERIES OF PERES
LE MOINE AND GARASSE.

REVEREND FATHERS,

August 18, 1656.

I HAVE seen the letters put forth by you, in answer to those of mine addressed to a friend, on the principles of your moral system ; and I observe that a main point insisted upon by you in your defence is, that I have not expressed myself with sufficient gravity in animadverting upon your tenets. This is reiterated by you in all your publications ; and you even go so far as to assert, that I have been guilty of turning sacred things into ridicule.

This reproach, reverend Fathers, is as surprising as it is unjust. In what part of my communications, I demand, is this ridicule of sacred things to be found ? You par-

* The feigned name (Louis de Montalte) under which the Letters were originally published.

ticularize especially the Mohatra Contract, and the history of John D'Alba. But are these, I pray you, what you call "sacred things?" Is the Mohatra a matter of so holy a nature, that it is blasphemous to refer to it without due reverence? And the instructions of Père Bauny on the subject of larceny, which induced John D'Alba to put them in practice, to the prejudice of your learned body—are they of so sacred a character, as to brand with impiety those who venture to allude to them with raillery?

What Sirs! the fictions of your brethren are to pass for the solemnities of faith; and we are not to be suffered to jest at the absurdities of Escobar, and the fantastic and antichristian decisions of your authorities, without incurring the reproach of bringing religion into ridicule! Is it possible that you should have brought yourselves to repeat so often a charge thus utterly unreasonable? Do you not fear, that while you are blaming me for indulging a smile at your extravagance, you may furnish me therein with a fresh subject of ridicule; and make the charge recoil upon yourselves, by showing, that it is from the absurdities of your own books alone, that I have drawn the materials of satire? And may it not then become apparent, that, in exposing the sophistries of your moral code, I have been as far from ridiculing religion, as the doctrines of your Casuists differ from the holy precepts of the gospel?

Be assured, my Fathers, that it is a very different thing to jest at religion, and to ridicule those who profane it by their perversions. It were indeed impiety to fail in reverence for the sacred revelations of God's Spirit; but it would be impiety of another kind, not to expose to merited

contempt the impostures which the pernicious ingenuity of man opposes to them !

For since, reverend Fathers, you compel me to enter upon this controversy, I entreat you to consider, that in proportion as the truths of Christianity are entitled to our love and respect, in the same proportion are their counterfeits deserving of contempt and aversion. There are two especial qualities in Christian verity—a sacred majesty which challenges reverence, and a divine beauty which inspires love. And there is also in error, an impiety which excites distrust, and an impertinence that exposes to ridicule. For this reason, as all holy men desire to cherish sentiments of the deepest love and reverence for truth, and feel their real wisdom to consist in the fear, which is its great principle, and the love, which is its object ; so do they not scruple to entertain both hatred and contempt for error ; and their zeal prompts them equally to oppose the powers of reason to the malignity of the impious, and to scatter with the shafts of ridicule their extravagance and folly.

Flatter not yourselves then, Fathers, that you can induce the world to deem it unbecoming in a Christian to resort to raillery in his assaults upon error ! Nothing is more easy than to prove that the practice is both just in itself, and usual with the fathers of the Church ; that it is sanctioned by Scripture and by the example of the most eminent saints ; and that it claims the august authority even of the Deity himself.

Do you not know that the Lord both abhors and despises sinners ; insomuch that even in the hour of death, that period the most affecting and mournful in their

whole career—Divine Wisdom has declared that it will add mockery and scorn to the wrath which consigns them to eternal perdition ; “ *In interitu vestro ridebo et subsannabo* ” ? And the righteous, in the same spirit, will indulge the like emotions ; for (as David says) when they see the punishment of the wicked, “ they will both fear and mock—*Videbunt justi et timebunt ; et super eum ridebunt.* ” And Job says the same thing ; “ *Innocens subsannabit eos.* ”

But further, it is most remarkable, that in the very first words addressed by God to man, after his fall, we find a species of raillery—and, according to the authority of the Fathers, “ a pointed irony.” For after Adam had disobeyed, in the vain hope which the devil had inspired, that he would become like the gods, it appears from Scripture, that God rendered him subject to the punishment of death ; and that, having reduced him to this unhappy condition—the result of his sin—he mocked him with these sarcastic words, “ Behold ! man is become as one of us !—*Ecce Adam quasi unus ex nobis !* ” “ A cutting and palpable irony on the part of the Deity, to aggravate his fall,” according to Chrysostom and other interpreters. “ Adam,” Rupert says, “ had justly exposed himself to this mockery, and would feel it more acutely than more serious language.” And Hugues de St. Victor, after similar sentiments, adds ; “ This ironical language was fully incurred by his credulity and sin.”

You see, then, my Father, that raillery is sometimes proper, to awaken men to a sense of their extravagances, and is then, in fact, only justice : for says Jeremiah, “ *Vana sunt et risù dignà.* ” And so far is this kind of

ridicule from impiety, that according to the words of St. Augustine, "The wise mock at the wicked because they are wise; not in a wisdom of their own, but in that which is divine, and which exults at the ruin of the wicked."

In like manner, the prophets, filled with the Spirit of God, availed themselves of the weapons of ridicule; as in the examples of Daniel and Elijah. Finally, we have instances of the same thing in the discourses of Christ himself; and St. Augustine remarks, that, intending to humble Nicodemus, who deemed himself a master in the law; and seeing him inflated with pride in his attainments, as a doctor in Israel, he first surprises him by the depth of his questions; and then, having reduced him to an incapability of reply, he says: "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" As if he had said, "Proud man, know you not that you know nothing?" And both St. Chrysostom and St. Cyril remark hereupon, that this species of raillery is justifiable.

You must perceive, then, from these instances, that if it should happen in our days, that those professing to be masters among Christians (like Nicodemus and the Pharisees among the Jews), should show themselves to be ignorant of the first principles of their religion; and maintain (for instance) "that we may be saved without ever having experienced love to God in the whole course of our lives;" we should, in that case, be only following the example of our Saviour, in exposing to the severest ridicule their vanity and their ignorance. It is, I repeat, in no wise inconsistent with sanctity, to ridicule, on fit occasions, the errors and fallacies of men: were it other-

'wise we should censure some of the greatest names in our Church, who have sanctioned the practice—such as St. Jerome, in his Letters and Treatises against Jovinian ; Vigilantius, and the Pelagians ; Tertullian, in his “ Apology,” written against the follies of idolatry ; St. Augustine, against the Monks of Africa, whom he calls “ long-haired ” (chevelus) ; St. Irenæus, against the Gnostics ; St. Bernard, and the Fathers of the Church ; who, having themselves been imitators of the Apostles, ought to be examples to the faithful, and the true models of Christians in all ages, and to the present day.

I have therefore entertained the belief that I could not err in following such examples ; and having, as I trust, succeeded in establishing the position I proposed, I shall only subjoin the admirable words of Tertullian, which seem to me fully to confirm the course I have taken : “ What I have now been doing is but a *pastime* preparatory to the real conflict. I have rather shown a semblance of wounds that might have been given, than inflicted them. If some passages have tended to excite merriment, it has been rather in the subjects than in the mode of treating them. There are many things that require to be touched with lenity and banter, lest we should give them too much importance by serious discussion. Nothing is more appropriate to folly than ridicule ; and it is, properly, truth alone that ought to indulge in smiles, because she is happy in herself, and may venture to amuse herself at her enemies' expense, inasmuch as she is assured of victory. She ought undoubtedly to be careful, that her raillery be not gross in its expressions, and unworthy of her cause. But (with this limitation), when it

can be advantageously employed, it is "a duty that it should be so." Is not this language, my Fathers, appropriate to our purpose? Are not my late letters "a *pas-time* preparatory to the real conflict?" I have but amused myself "by showing the wounds that might have been given, rather than inflicted them." I have simply held up to view the passages in question, without commenting upon them. "If some of them have caused mirth, it is the subjects themselves that have caused it." What, I pray, is so suited to excite ridicule, as to see the weighty subjects of Christian morals mixed up with fantastic imaginations like yours? Such is their way of treating this sublime system, that they tell us "Jesus Christ has himself revealed to your Fathers, 'that a priest who has received money for saying a mass, may, in addition, take payment from others, in consideration of his making over to them all his *own* share of the sacrifice: ' 'that a Monastic is not liable to excommunication for leaving off his habit, even if it be for the purpose of joining in dances, for pilfering, or going incognito to places of licentiousness: ' and 'that we fulfil the duty of attending mass, by listening to four fourth-parts of the office at once, from different priests?'" I say then, after hearing these and similar decisions, it is impossible to avoid ridicule, or to deal in any other way than that of sarcasm with such absurdities; since, according to Tertullian, "it would be to give them weight and authority to discuss them seriously."

What! are we to bring to bear the force of Scripture and tradition, in order to demonstrate that it is treacherous to kill an enemy by sword-wounds from behind, or in

ambuscade; and that it is purchasing a benefice to give money as a *motive* to the party to resign? These are assuredly among the things that excite only contempt; and that “deserve to be encountered with mockery and ridicule.” Again, as says this ancient writer, “Nothing is more appropriate to folly than raillery;” and the remainder of his sentiments apply so well to the point in question, as to leave no doubt that it is perfectly allowable to laugh at error, without violation of good manners and decorum.

I must also contend, my Fathers, that ridicule may be employed without any infringement of charity; although my use of this weapon is one of the charges you have brought against me in your late publication. “For charity induces us sometimes to indulge in ridicule at men’s errors, for the very purpose of causing them to see their absurdity, and thus to forsake them;” according to St. Augustine: “*Hæc tu misericorditer irride, ut eis ridenda ac fugienda commendes.*” And equally are we sometimes compelled, in the same spirit, to denounce them with warmth; as St. Gregory Nazianzen teaches, in these words: “The spirit of charity and kindness has both its tenderness and its severity.” “In truth,” as says St. Augustine again, “who shall dare to affirm, that truth is to remain passive under the aggressions of error; and that the enemies of the faith shall be allowed to disturb the pious by their audacities, or amuse them by sallies of wit and humour; while the orthodox are to be restricted to a frigidness of language that shall send the reader to sleep?”

See you not, then, I pray, that in this way, we should

allow to be brought into the Church the most extravagant, and pernicious errors, without daring, on the one hand, to expose them to deserved contempt by raillery, lest we should be charged with want of good manners; or, on the other, to attack them with more vigorous weapons, lest a breach of charity should be imputed to us?

What, reverend sirs! *you* are to tell us, “that life may be taken for a blow, or an injury;” and we may not be allowed, in the most public manner, to denounce an error of such grave importance to the public! *You* are to be at liberty to say “that a judge may with safe conscience retain the wicked gains that he has made by corruption;” and we are to have no leave to contradict the position! *You* publish to the world, with the consent of your whole body, “that a man can be saved without love of God;” and you would shut the mouth of those who desire to defend the truth and the faith; warning them that they will violate brotherly charity by controverting, and offend against Christian modesty by ridiculing your maxims! I doubt, my Fathers, whether there are any whom you have succeeded in bringing over to your views. But should there be persons so credulous as to be persuaded that I have violated the dues of charity towards yourselves by denouncing your moral precepts, I request them now to examine carefully the grounds of this opinion. For, although they may imagine that it originates in zeal to prevent imputations against their neighbours; let them consider, that it may not possibly own another source; and may but too probably arise from that secret opposition (often undetected even by ourselves) which our evil nature is ever apt to raise, against those who set themselves to

stem the tide of moral corruption. And, to furnish them with a rule to discover the true principle of their conduct; I would ask them, whether, while they complain of the manner in which religionists have been treated, they still more warmly resent the treatment which *Divine Truth* has received at those religionists' hands? If their displeasure have been excited, not only against these letters, but yet more against the principle which it is their object to expose, then I shall be willing to acknowledge, that their resentment has its source in a zeal, sincere, though unenlightened; and, in such case, the authorities I am now adducing will suffice to set them right. But if, on the other hand, such persons can feel wrath only against my animadversions, and none against the matters which I have censured, truly, my Fathers, I do not scruple to tell them they are grossly abused, and their zeal is as blind as it is misdirected!

Singular indeed is that zeal which rouses against such as dare to denounce error, but is passive towards those with whom that error originates! Novel the charity which resents the overthrow of flagrant impostures, but is silent under the moral contamination which they produce! Were such persons in danger of assassination, would they be offended with the friend who warned them of the ambush prepared for them? Instead of turning out of its way, would they trifle in complaints of the uncharitableness of him who so seasonably informed them of the murderous plot? Are they displeased at a warning to abstain from food that contains poison; or not to visit a neighbourhood which is the seat of pestilence?

How is it then, that we are stigmatized with unchari-

tableness for exposing principles fatal to religion ; and yet should be thought wanting in charity, in not giving warning against that which would be hurtful to health or life ? Is it not, that the love of life causes us to entertain with favor every thing that tends to its preservation ; while an indifference to truth leads us not only to take no part in its defence, but to view with hostility the efforts of others to overthrow falsehood ?

I entreat such persons to consider—and that, as in the sight of God—the scandal and injury which the moral system of your Casuists, so widely diffused, is producing throughout the Church ; the unbounded licence of manners to which it is giving rise ; the fierce and stubborn audacity with which it is propagated ? And if they cannot perceive that the time is come for making a stand against such corruptions, their blindness is not less lamentable than your own, O Fathers ! and both you and they will fall under the apostrophe of St. Augustine, upon the words of our Saviour in the Gospel : “ Woe to the blind who lead ! Woe to the blind who are led !—*Væ cæcis ducentibus ! Væ cæcis sequentibus !* ”

But that you may no longer have any justification for entertaining these impressions yourselves, or conveying them to others, I will tell you, my Fathers—and I blush to be compelled to instruct, when I ought rather to be sitting submissively at the feet of age, of authority, and learning—I will tell you what are the marks that have been assigned by the leaders of our Church to indicate whether censures, such as these, proceed from a spirit of piety and charity, or of impiety and malice.

The first of these marks then, is, that piety always

uses the language of sincerity and truth ; while envy and hatred use that of falsehood and calumny—" Splendientia et vehementia, sed rebus veris," says St. Augustine, de Doct. Chr. B. 4, C. 28. " Whosoever resorts to falsehood is under the influence of Satan. No regulation of the motive can justify calumny ; and if the conversion of the world were at stake, it would not be lawful to malign the innocent ; because we ought not to do the smallest evil to bring about even the greatest good ; and the truth of God hath no need of our falsehood," according to the Scripture (Job xiii. 7,) " Will ye speak wickedly for God ? " " It is the duty of those who defend the truth to speak nothing but truth," says St. Hilary, Con. Const. Therefore, reverend Fathers, I can declare, as before God, that there is nothing I detest more than the slightest violation of truth ; and that I have been always most especially careful, not only not to falsify (for that would be detestable) but not to alter or pervert in the *smallest degree* the sense of any passage I have quoted. So that, availing myself in this argument, of the words of St. Hilary again, I would say with him, " if we assert what is false, let us be accounted infamous ; but if we can demonstrate that our statements are palpable and notorious, it is not to go beyond the bounds of modesty and apostolical liberty, to direct these reproaches against them."

But it is not sufficient that we state only what is the truth ; we are bound also not, at *all* times, to say all that is true ; because we ought only to give publicity to things that may serve a useful purpose, and not to such as may cause pain to individuals, without conducing to

general utility. And thus, as the first rule is truth, so is the second discretion. "The wicked," says St. Augustine, ep. 8, "persecute the good, in following blindly the guidance of their passions; the good, on the other hand, oppose the wicked, in the exercise of a sound discretion; as the surgeon carefully considers the wound he is about to inflict; while a murderer deals his destructive blows at random." You well know, my Fathers, that I have not reported *many* of these maxims of your authorities, respecting which you would have felt the most sensitively; although I might have done so—and that without offending against discretion—as many wise and most catholic men before me had done: and every one who has read your authors, knows, as well as yourselves, how greatly I have spared you. I have, further, not said a word on any occasion to the prejudice of any members of your body *individually*; and should have revolted from any allusion to secret and personal delinquencies, whatever might have been the proofs I possessed of them. For I well know that this is the characteristic of hatred and malevolence, and is a practice never to be justified, but when required by the most pressing necessity, for the welfare of the Church. It is evident then, that I have in no degree been wanting in prudence in the allegations I have thought it my duty to make against your system of morality; and that you have more need to commend me for my abstinence, than to complain of my indiscretion.

The third rule is, that when necessity compels to resort to raillery, we should confine the use of such a weapon to the errors only upon which we may be animadverting, and not employ it against really sacred things;

while a spirit of buffoonery, impiety, and heresy, aims to bring ridicule upon the most solemn realities. I have already defended myself against this imputation; and in truth there is not much danger of infringing this precept in commenting upon opinions such as those I have adduced from your authorities!

Finally, my Fathers—to condense these rules in one, the principal and the very substance of all—Divine love should influence the heart, supremely to seek the spiritual good of those, against whom we direct our censures; and to address our petitions to God, simultaneously with our reproaches against man. “We ought,” says St. Augustine, “to cherish charity in the heart, even when we are compelled externally to do what is offensive to men; and to inflict upon them severe but salutary chastisement: their welfare should be preferred to their comfort.” It is my conviction, Reverend Fathers, that there is nothing in my letters inconsistent with such a desire on my part for you; and charity therefore must compel you to believe such to have been in reality my motive.

But if you are desirous indeed that I should briefly exhibit to you a conduct at variance with these rules, and bearing the true character of buffoonery, malice, and hatred, I will produce some specimens; and in, order that they may be the more known and familiar to you, they shall be drawn from the pages of your *own* writers.

To begin, then, with the contemptuous manner in which the authors of your school deal with sacred things, whether in their jocularities, their gallantries, or their serious discussions, would you consider the various absurd stories introduced by your Père Benit, into his “Consolations

for the Sick," as very appropriate to his ostensible design of furnishing Christian consolation to those who are suffering under the afflictions of God? Would you maintain that the profane and wanton manner in which the Père Le Moine talks of piety, in his "Devotion made Easy," is calculated to inspire respect for the picture he draws of Christian virtue? Does his entire work of "Moral Portraits"—whether the prose or the verse—breathe of aught but the vanity and follies of the world? Is the poem in the seventh book entitled "Praises of Modesty," worthy of an ecclesiastic, purporting to show that every thing fair blushes, or is subject to blushing? It professes to be intended to console a lady, who is called Delphine, and who had a habit of frequent blushing. The burthen of each stanza is, that every thing most admired is of a blushing hue, such as roses, pomegranates, the lips, the tongue; and it is amongst these gallantries, disgraceful to a Pietist, that he dares indecently to mix up allusions to those *blessed spirits* who stand before the Lord, and whom the Christian should never name but with reverence.*

* The following are the lines alluded to, which almost defy a translation that would do them *justice*:

Les chérubins, ces glorieux
Composés de tête et de plume,
Que Dieu de son esprit allume,
Et qu'il éclaire de ses yeux;
Ces illustres faces volantes
Sont toujours rouges et brûlantes
Soit du feu de Dieu, soit du leur,
Et dans leur flammes mutuelles
Font du mouvement de leur ailes
Un éventail à leur chaleur.
Mais la rougeur éclate en toi,
Delphine, avec plus d'avantage,
Quand l'honneur est sur ton visage
Vêtu de pourpre comme un roi, &c.

What will you say, Fathers, to the preference assigned to the blushes of Delphine over the glowing ardours of those spiritual beings, inspired by Divine love alone? And the comparison of a fan to the mysterious flutterings of their wings—is that consistent with Christian decorum, in one who performs the function of consecrating the holy body of the Saviour? I know the scope of the composition is only gallantry and banter: but what is all that, but turning sacred things into jest? And is it any valid plea to urge, as is done in the first book, in language equally unbecoming—"The Sorbonne extends not its jurisdiction over Parnassus, and the errors of that fair region are not obnoxious to its censures or inquisitions:" as if blasphemy and impiety were only blameable in prose! But, at all events, such a plea would not avail for the following passage, taken from the preface to the same work: "The river, on the border of which the author has composed these verses, is so calculated for the formation of poets, that if *baptismal* water were to be taken from it, it would not have the effect of driving away the spirit of poetry?" Nor that again of your Père Garasse in his Summary of the Chief Truths of Religion, p. 640, in which he adds blasphemy to heresy, in the following language on the sacred mystery of the Incarnation: "The human personality has been, as it were, grafted, or mounted* on the back of the personality of the Word." And that other passage of the same author, p. 510—besides other similar—in which he utters a stupid jest upon the name of Jesus, designated usually thus, J. H. S.

In thus manner it is that you degrade the great verities

* 'Monté à cheval.' (Fr.)

of religion, in contravention of the inviolable rule, which enjoins to treat them with reverence. And you do no less wrong to those who impose upon themselves, as a duty, the strict observance of truth and discretion. What is it that abounds more in your writings than calumny? Are the allegations of Père Brisacier consistent with truth at pp. 24, 25, 4th Part, that the nuns of Port Royal make no invocations to the saints, and have no images in their churches? Are these not audacious falsehoods, since the very contrary is known to be the case throughout the whole of Paris? Is it a decent discretion to impeach the character of these pure-minded and exemplary females—to call them impenitent, neglectful of the sacraments, undevout, foolish, fantastical, abandoned, and whatever else is opprobrious—and to heap such calumnies upon them as even to draw down upon the slanderer the censure of the late Archbishop of Paris? Then, again, to traduce the priests, whose morals are so irreproachable, saying, 1st Part, p. 22, “that they introduce novelties into the confessional, for the purpose of entrapping the fair and the innocent; and that the author would be shocked to record the abominations they are guilty of?” Is it not an intolerable audacity to advance such flagrant inventions, not only without proof, but without the slightest shadow, or pretence of reality! I shall say no more on this subject at present, but postpone further remark to another occasion. What I have now advanced may be sufficient to show the degree in which you have violated equally the laws of truth and discretion.

But it may, perhaps, be said, that, at least, the last of the rules which have been cited is not infringed by you,

viz. that which enjoins us to seek the spiritual welfare of those whom we censure; and that this charge cannot be brought against you without violating secrets which are known to God alone. Wonderful is it, my Fathers, that the means should be in our power to convict you of this charge also; that carrying your hatred against your opponents to such a length as to aim at their eternal destruction, your infatuation should have been such as to betray to the world an aim so abominable, that, far from cherishing secret aspirations for their eternal welfare, you have indulged in public vows for their damnation; and that, after having given utterance to these execrable desires, to the scandal of the whole Church, in the town of Caen, you should also have dared to reiterate in Paris, in your authorized works, a sentiment so diabolical! You here reach the climax of violation of true piety; ribald raillery on the most sacred subjects, false and scandalous calumny of holy women and ecclesiastics, and, lastly, open desires and vows for their eternal perdition! I know not, O Fathers, where is your sense of shame; when you can venture to charge a want of charity upon us, who have been so scrupulously observant of truth and moderation—while you, yourselves, have been guilty of such lamentable transports of malevolence!

I will, for the present, conclude, by noticing only one other charge which you have brought against me, namely, that amongst the numerous axioms of your authorities upon which I have remarked, some had been *previously* subjected to censure. To this I answer, that it is for this very reason—because you have so little profited by previous comments, that I now repeat them. What has been

the fruit, I ask, of the reiterated animadversions of so many learned men—nay of the entire University—in their numerous writings? What has been the conduct of your Annats, your Caussins, Pintereaus and Le Moines in their replies, but to overwhelm with obloquy those who ventured to give them these salutary councils? Have you *suppressed* the works in which such offensive principles are inculcated? Have their authors been reprehended? Has the criticism produced more circumspection? And is it not, on the contrary, subsequent to all this, that Escobar has been so frequently *reprinted* both in France and in the Low Countries; and that your Pères Cellot, Bagot, Bauny, Laury, Le Moine and others, have been incessantly putting forth similar publications, with other novelties, as licentious as any of the former? Complain not then, Sirs, that I have made the subject of my renewed censure, principles and doctrines which (if before attacked) you have never abandoned—that I have exposed others and yet more unsound dogmas, to the public gaze—that I have made all, alike, the vehicles of ridicule and sarcasm. Look at them once again calmly, and you will see in them your own confusion, and my defence. Who can hear without scorn the decision of Père Bauny in the case of Incendiarism; that of Père Cellot on the question of Restitution; the rules of Sanchez in favour of *Necromancers*; the way in which Hurtado gets rid of the sin of duelling, by allowing the party to walk in a field and fall in (of course *by accident*) with his antagonist; the refinements of Bauny for evading the crime of usury; the method of keeping clear of Simony by a theory of intention; and that of avoiding falsehood by sometimes

speaking loud and sometimes low ; with various other similar sophistries, of your gravest doctors ? Is any thing more required for my justification ? ‘Is aught,’ as says Tertullian, ‘due to such opinions—so compounded of weakness and inanity—but ridicule ?’ Yes, Reverend Fathers, I must tell you that the corruption of morals to which your doctrines lead, requires also *another* mode of animadversion ; and we may justly ask with the same holy writer again, ‘Shall we laugh at their folly, or lament their blindness :’ ‘*Rideam vanitatem, an exprobrebre cœcitatem ?*’ My conviction is, my Fathers, that we may at our pleasure both laugh and weep by turns ! ‘*Haec tolerabilius vel ridentur, vel flentur,*’ says St. Augustine, cont. Faust. B. 20, C. 6. Remember that Holy Writ declares the same truth. And it is my desire that I may not see realized in you those words in the Proverbs, “There are some so unreasonable as never to be satisfied, however they are treated, whether it be by ridicule, or by anger.” *

P. S.—Since closing my letter, I have seen a publication emanating from your Society, in which I am accused of misrepresentation in regard to six of your maxims, reported by me, and of making common cause with heretics. I trust you will receive an exact and early reply to this charge ; and I suspect that, after a time, you will not be much inclined to repeat these kind of recriminations.

* If by the ‘Proverbs’ here is meant the part of Scripture so entitled, the above must, I apprehend, be only a paraphrase of some passage, as I am not aware of any part from which it is literally taken. (Transal.)

LETTER XII.

REFUTATION OF THE SOPHISTRIES OF THE JESUITS ON THE SUBJECTS OF ALMS-GIVING AND SIMONY.

REVEREND FATHERS,

I had prepared to address you respecting the aspersions in which you have so long indulged towards me in your various publications; styling me successively 'impious and ignorant,' 'buffoon and Merry-Andrew, an impostor, a calumniator, a cheat, a heretic, a Calvinist in disguise, a disciple of Molina, one possessed with devils, &c. &c.' Not choosing entirely to acquiesce in such treatment, I was about to appeal to the world as to its justice, and had determined publicly to expose your calumnies and impositions, when your later replies to me appeared; and therein I found myself made, in my turn, the subject of similar charges of imposition on your part. I have thus been obliged to alter my plan of proceeding; although I intend still, in a measure, to pursue my original purpose; and trust to be able, in defending myself from the charge of impostures, to convict you of some more palpable and flagrant than any which you have imputed to me.

And truly, my Fathers, your case is one of more suspicion than my own. Little probable is it that, standing as I do alone—without external power or human aid—and confronting a body so powerful as yours,—sustained alone by the weapons of integrity and truth, I should expose myself to the loss of every thing dear to me, by risking a conviction of falsehood and imposture! It is but too easy to detect untruth in matters of fact like these; and well do I know, I should not lack accusers, nor would full scope and opportunity be denied to them to establish their charges. As for you, Reverend Sirs, your position is far different; you may use what language you please against me, and I can complain to none. In this unequal contest, I should feel little bound to use reserve, did not *other* considerations restrain me. Nevertheless, as you choose to hold me up as an impostor, you compel me to a defence; while, as you must know that this cannot be made without fresh disclosures on my part, and laying bare anew the whole foundation of your moral system, I must be allowed to entertain doubts of the policy of your conduct. The war must now be carried on within your own borders, and at your own cost; and although you may think, that by mystifying the questions at issue with scholastic terms, the replies will be so tedious, so obscure and abstruse, as to repel the public mind from their consideration, you may possibly find yourselves herein mistaken. It shall be my endeavour to occasion as little weariness as may be possible in such a controversy as this. Your maxims have at least this property, that they afford universal *amusement*. Remember, however, that it is yourselves who challenge me anew

to this discussion ; and let us now see which of us shall come the best out of it.

The foremost of your charges of imposture is concealing the 'opinion of Vasquez upon the duty of alms-giving.' Allow me however, first of all, to give a clear explanation of the point at issue, in order that all obscurity be removed in our discussion.

It is well known, Sirs, that according to the authority of the Church, there are two precepts on the subject of alms ; the one, to give of our superfluity for relieving the ordinary necessities of the poor, the other to give of what is even necessary to ourselves (according to our means,) in cases of extreme destitution. This is what is laid down by Cajetan following St. Thomas ; so that, to ascertain the spirit of Vasquez' regulations of alms-giving, we must examine his directions, both as to what may be deemed superfluous, and what necessary.

As to superfluity, which is the most usual resource for the relief of the poor, this is entirely got rid of by the tenet I recited in my letter, De Fl. c. 4, N. 14, viz. 'That which persons, moving in the world, retain for supporting their station in society, and that of their relatives, is not to be deemed superfluous. Therefore it can rarely happen that such persons, *even of the most exalted rank*—not excepting Sovereigns—can be said to possess a superfluity.' You see therefore, my Fathers, that according to this definition, no persons of an aspiring disposition are likely to suffer under a superfluity of possessions : and by this means, alms-giving, in regard to the greater part of the world, is virtually abolished.

But even if this were not the case, men would be dis-

pensed from this duty, in cases of ordinary necessity, according to Vasquez; who impugns *entirely* any obligation of the kind on the part of the rich. These are his words, ch. 1, d. 4, N. 32. ‘Corduba,’ he says, ‘teaches that those who enjoy a superfluity of means are bound to distribute, at least some portion to all who are in circumstances of ordinary necessity, in order, in some measure, to conform to the precepts of the church on this head; but this I do not agree with: ‘*sed hoc non placet*;’ for we have demonstrated the contrary, in opposition to Cajetan and Navarre.’ Thus, my Fathers, the obligation to alms-giving, under this head, is according to this decision entirely abolished.

As regards the duty, in case of extreme and pressing necessity, you see that by the various conditions which must unite to impose the obligation, the very wealthiest people in Paris may pass their whole lives without having once incurred it. ‘I will only adduce two of these; the one is, that ‘they must be certain that the poor applicant will not be able to receive relief from any *other* quarter;’ ‘*hæc intelligo et cætera omnia, quando scio nullum alium opem laturum*, ch. 1, N. 28.” What shall be said to this, Reverend Sirs? Is it likely often to happen, I would ask, that in Paris, where beneficence so abounds, it shall be demonstrable that none would be found except ourselves to relieve a distressed applicant? And yet, according to this authority, unless ascertained of this fact, the cry of poverty may always, with a safe conscience, be left unheeded! The other preliminary is, ‘that the necessity of the pauper shall be such that he be in imminent • danger to life or good fame;’ N. 24 and 26. This is a

case certainly not of very common occurrence ; and what proves the infrequency of it is, that the author says (N. 45) that the poor man, being thus in the circumstances which are to impose the necessity of alms-giving for his relief, ' is justified in *robbing* the rich for the relief of his necessity.' So that, after absolving the rich from the duty of giving alms of his superfluity (which is the grand source of charity,) he only obliges him to afford relief to the poor, in circumstances of such exigency, as that, according to his doctrine, the pauper object is permitted to help himself to the goods of the rich. This is Vasquez's theory, to which you refer your readers for their edification.

I come now to other charges of misrepresentation. You insist much upon the way in which Vasquez enforces the duty of alms-giving upon ecclesiastics ; but this is not the question between us at present. Be assured I shall be ready to discuss it whenever you please. As to the laity (whose case alone it is we are considering), you seem to wish it to be understood that Vasquez is speaking, in the passages I have quoted, only the sentiments of Cajetan, and not his own. As nothing, however, can be more unfounded than this, and as you have not ventured so far even as to state the fact unreservedly, I am willing, for your own sake, to believe that it was not your intention to convey such a meaning.

You afterwards complain vehemently, that, after quoting the maxim of Vasquez, ' that scarcely any persons living in the world—not even excepting sovereigns—will be found to possess "superfluity," ' I should have deduced the conclusion that the rich are under very little obliga-

tion to give of their superfluity. But what else does this mean, I pray? If it be true, that the rich may contend that they rarely possess superfluous wealth, is it not equally certain that they cannot be bound to give alms out of their superfluity? I might pursue the argument at more length, had not Diana (who is so great an admirer of Vasquez, that he calls him "the Phoenix of minds"), drawn the same inference from his principles; for, after quoting the maxims referred to of Vasquez, he thus concludes: "As to the question, Whether the rich are bound to give alms of their superfluity, although the opinion may be well founded, it will seldom or never happen that they will be under any obligation to act upon it." Now, I have done no more than follow, word for word, these authorities. Diana, however, may repeat with eulogies these sentiments of Vasquez, may hold them forth as most reasonable, and "very convenient for the rich" (as he says in the same place); and you hold him to be no calumniator, no forger, no impostor. But if I, on the contrary, venture to adduce these same opinions (but by no means holding their author to be a *phœnix*)—I am an impostor, a forger, a calumniator of his principles! Be assured, reverend Fathers, you have good reason to fear, that this difference in your conduct towards those whose *statements* are identical, and who disagree only in their opinions of your doctors, will betray your secret motive; and make it apparent that your only aim is to uphold, by whatever means, the reputation of your Society. So long as your accommodating theology passes for a prudent condescension to the infirmities of your followers; you are not forward to disavow the statements of those who pub-

lish it, but, on the contrary, eulogize them, as contributing to the support of a common object. But when it is denounced as a pernicious laxity, then the same instinct of self-defence leads you to disavow principles which are bringing discredit upon you. Thus you own or repudiate, not by the rules of truth, which are immutable, but by the mere accident of shifting circumstances; according to the ancient saying, “*Omnia pro tempore, nihil pro veritate.*” Take heed, then, O Fathers! and that you may not again charge me with having drawn from the principles laid down by Vasquez, conclusions which he would have disavowed, know that he has drawn those very conclusions himself (C. I. N. 27): “Persons are *scarcely* bound,” he says, “to alms-giving, when only out of their superfluity, according to the opinion of Cajetan, and *according to mine* also—*et secundum nostram.*” You must confess then, Sirs, on the testimony of Vasquez himself, that I have exactly stated his sentiments; and you will then see with what justice you have dared to say, “If the matter be investigated to its source, it will be seen that he (Vasquez) has inculcated the very opposite doctrine.”

By what I have now adduced, then, you show the value of your assertion, that if Vasquez does not compel the rich to give alms of their superfluity, he enjoins, as a set-off, that they should give of that which is necessary to themselves. But you have omitted to add the combination of circumstances which he declares to be necessary to constitute the obligation, and which restrict it almost to the point of annihilation; while, instead of stating explicitly his doctrines, you say, generally, that he compels the rich to give, even of that which is necessary to their station.

This would be proving too much, my good Fathers. The gospel-rule goes not this length; and Vasquez would be far from falling into such an error. To conceal his laxness, you impute to him a severity which would be actually blameable; and, by that means, you shake all belief in the fidelity of your representations. But he is by no means deserving of this reproach, after having maintained, as I have shown, that the rich are not bound by the laws of justice or charity, to give of their superfluity, and still less of their necessities, in any ordinary cases of poverty; and that the obligation in extraordinary cases is so rare, as scarcely ever to occur.

I have now disposed of all your cavils; and it only remains for me to show, how unfounded your assertion is that Vasquez is more rigid even than Cajetan. This will be extremely easy; for the Cardinal teaches, "We are bound in justice to give alms of our superfluity, even in relief of the ordinary necessities of the poor: since, according to the holy Fathers, the rich are only stewards of their possessions for the purpose of dispensing to the wants of the needy." And thus, instead of being, as Diana says of the maxims of Vasquez, "highly convenient and agreeable to the rich and their confessors," the doctrine of the Cardinal affords them no such consolation. He declares ("De Eleem." c. 6), that he has *no* words for the rich but those of Jesus Christ, "That it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and to their confessors, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Such sacredness did he attach to the duty in question!

And have not all the Fathers and holy men of old maintained the same obligation ? “ There are two cases,” says St. Thomas, 2. 2. q. 118, Art. 4, ad. 2, “ in which we are bound by the rules of justice to give alms—*ex debito legali*—the one, when the poor are in circumstances of dangerous destitution ; the other, when we ourselves enjoy a superfluity of means.” And q. 87, a. 1, ad. 4 : “ The tithes which the Jews were directed to distribute to the poor, have been augmented under the new law ; for Christ commands us to give not only a tenth, but the whole of our superfluity.” And yet Vasquez would exempt his followers from the distribution even of a pitiful fraction ; such is his indulgence towards the rich—his insensibility to the poor—his contrariety to the pious and beneficent sentiments expressed by the holy Gregory, in those words so unpalatable to the rich and worldly : “ When we minister to the necessity of the poor, we give them not so much of our own, as of theirs ; and it is a debt of justice, rather than an impulse of compassion.”

It is on this ground that the saints enjoin on the rich to share with the poor the bounties of earth, that they may enjoy together with them the blessings of heaven. And, instead of inculcating upon them, like your Brethren, *that* worldly ambition which would leave them no superfluous wealth, and those avaricious propensities which would forbid its distribution ; these holy men laboured to induce men to give bounteously of their superfluity ; and to show them how large would be its amount, if measured, not by our natural cupidity (which nothing can satisfy), but by the rule of piety, which seeks, with ingenious pains, to retrench all superfluous indulgence, in order that

we may have the more to dispense in the exercises of charity. "We shall have large superfluity," says St. Augustine, "if we confine ourselves within the limits of necessity; but if we give the reins to vain indulgence, nothing will satisfy us. Ascertain, my brethren, what suffices for the service of God, and the wants of nature; and not what is demanded by your cupidity, which is the mere temptation of Satan; and remember, that the superfluity of wealth is the necessity of the poor." In Ps. 147.

I earnestly desire, Reverend Fathers, that what I have now advanced, may not only serve for my justification, which is, in itself, of little importance; but may cause you to perceive and to abhor the evil tendency of those corrupt maxims of your Casuists; that thus we may be united together in the observance of the sacred rules of the gospel, by which we must all hereafter be judged!

As to the second matter in question, Simony—before replying to the reproaches you have cast upon me—I commence by an explanation of your doctrines on the subject. Finding yourselves embarrassed between those canons of the Church, which impose fearful penalties upon simoniacal practices, and the avaricious propensities of so many who are addicted to them, you have adopted your usual method, of conceding to men all that they desire; and to God—nothing but words and empty pretences! What does the simonist want, I pray, but *money*, for the bestowal of his benefices? And this is what you exempt from the charge of simony! But since it is necessary that the name should still exist—a certain something to which it may be attached—you have created for this purpose a mere fiction, which would never have occurred to

the thought of a simonist, and would indeed be useless to him,—that is, to weigh the money, considered in itself, against the spiritual good in question, considered in itself. Now, who would have ventured to compare things so disproportioned, and of such opposite natures? And yet, provided, as say your authorities, this metaphysical comparison be not made, it is allowable to transfer a benefice to another, and receive money as a consideration, without the crime of simony!

Thus it is that you make puppets of religion, in complaisance to men's corrupt passions. Yet, see with what gravity your Father Valentia delivers his vagaries, in the passage cited in my letter, t. 3, disp. 6, q. 19, part 3, p. 2044; "A temporal consideration," he says, "may be given for a spirituality in two ways; the one in fixing a higher price on the temporal than the spiritual,* which would be simony; the other in regarding the temporal consideration as the motive and inducement for the transfer of the spirituality, without, however, estimating the temporality higher than the spirituality; and this is no simony. The reason of which is, that simony consists in receiving a temporal consideration as the actual price of a spirituality. Now, if the temporality be required—*si petatur temporale*—not as the price, but as the motive which induces the bestowal, this is no kind of simony, even if the principal end and aim be the acquisition of the temporality—*minime erit simonia, etiamsi temporale principaliter intendatur et expectetur.*"

And your illustrious Sanchez has laid down similar

* 'Prisant davantage le temporel que le spirituel.' (Fr.)

dogmas, according to Escobar, tr. 6, ex. 2, N. 40. These are his words: "If a temporal consideration be given for a benefice, not as a price, but as a motive inducing the patron to the bestowal, or a compensation, if already bestowed, it is not simony. Sanchez declares this, Opusc. t. 2, l. 2, c. 3, d. 23, N. 7, Theses of Caen, 1644: "It is a probable opinion, inculcated by many Catholics, that it is not simony to bestow a spirituality for a temporal consideration, when the latter is not given as a price for the same." And as to Tannerus, this is his doctrine (and Valentia's is similar), which, I think, will show with what justice you complain of me, for alleging its discrepancy with that of St. Thomas. Here is his own avowal, in the passage cited in my letter, t. 3, disp. 5, p. 1519; "Properly speaking," he says, "there is no real and actual simony, excepting the receiving a temporal consideration as a price for a spiritual cure; but if it be taken as the motive for the bestowal of the benefice, or as a testimony of gratitude to the giver, then it is not simony, at least by the rules of conscience." And afterwards: "The same may be said, even if the temporality be the principal consideration, and made more the object than the spirituality; although St. Thomas, and some others, seem to hold the contrary; in that they affirm it absolutely to be simony to bestow a benefice for a temporal consideration, when the latter is the object of the transaction."

Here then, Reverend Fathers, is your doctrine on the subject of simony, as laid down by your most eminent authors, following each other's views with a wonderful exactness! It remains only for me to reply to your charges of misrepresentation upon this head.

You say nothing respecting the opinions of Valentia; and his doctrines, therefore, remain untouched by your statements. But it is upon Tannerus that you pause; and you allege that he has only decided the matter in question not to be simony "by the divine law;" leaving it to be supposed that I have suppressed, in my quotation, the words "by divine law." Now this, I maintain to be untenable; for the terms, "by divine law," are *not* at all in the passage. You go on to say that Tannerus declares it to be a simony "by actual law."* Again, you are wrong, Reverend Sirs: he does not say this in general terms; but only as to particular cases—"in casibus a jure expressis"—as he says in the same place. And herein he makes an exception from the general position laid down in the same passage, "that it is not sinning by the rule of conscience (simonie en conscience); which implies that it is not such by actual laws; unless you would convict Tannerus of the impiety of maintaining simony by actual law, not to be such by the rules of conscience. But you are fond of putting forward designedly such terms as, "right divine, positive right, natural right, interior and exterior tribunal, cases expressed by law, external presumption," and others equally obscure, in order to conceal your meaning under their abstruseness, and blind people's eyes to your extravagances. You shall, however, I assure you, not escape by these subtilties: I proceed to put to you some questions of so simple a nature, that they shall not be subject to a "*distinguo*."

I ask you then, my Reverend Fathers—without making

* 'De droit positif.' (Fr.)

it any question of "positive rights" or "external presumption" or "an exterior tribunal"—whether an incumbent, according to your authority, is a Simonist who transfers a benefice of four thousand livres annual value,* and receives ten thousand francs money down,† not as the price of the living, but as a *motive* which induces him to give it? Answer me plainly, Sirs; what would be the decision of your authors upon such a case as this? Would not Tannerus say, with his usual formalities, "It is not Simony by the rules of conscience, because the temporal consideration is not the price of the benefice, but only the motive which causes him to bestow it?" Would not Valentia, Sanchez, and Escobar also, (as do your Caen Theses) decide it "not to be Simony" for the same reason? Is any thing further necessary to shelter this incumbent from the charge of Simony? And would you venture to treat him as guilty of the offence, in your confessionals, (whatever might be your private opinion of his case,) when he would have it in his power to silence you by alleging that he had acted on the opinions of such learned authorities as these? Acknowledge then, that the party, whose case we are supposing, must be acquitted of Simony, according to your doctrine; and then defend the doctrines themselves in the best way you can.

This is the proper way, my Fathers, to treat questions of this kind; to dissect and disentangle them, instead of wrapping them up in scholastic terms; or changing the state of the question, as you do (in your last piece of

* 'De quatre mille livres de rente.' (Fr.)

† 'Dix mille francs argent comptant.' (Fr.)

vituperation) after this fashion: "Tannerus," you say, "declares at least, that such a barter is a great offence." And then you reproach me with having maliciously suppressed this expression, which, as you allege, *entirely justifies him*. Here again you are mistaken, and in various ways. For, even, were what you state true, it would not be a question, (in regard to the passages I referred to) whether sin had been committed, but simply, is it Simony? Now these are two very opposite questions. "Sin," according to your principles, "only requires confession; Simony demands restitution:" and there are those who consider these things to be very different. For you have invented methods to render confession most indulgent; but none have been found to make restitution agreeable. I must further tell you that the case which Tannerus holds to be one of sin, is not simply, that in which a spiritual property is given for a temporal, which is the principal motive; but he superadds, "that the temporal shall be valued higher than the spiritual." And it is not amiss in him to adduce such a case as this as a sin; for a man must be either very knavish, or very stupid, who could not avoid falling into sin, by a device so easy as that of, merely, not drawing into a comparison the value of these two matters, when he is at liberty to give the one in exchange for the other. Besides this, Valentia, in his enquiry, (in the part already referred to) whether it be sinful to exchange spiritualities for a temporal consideration (the latter being the motive for the barter) reports the reasons of those who decide in the affirmative, adding: "*sed hoc non videtur mihi satis certum*"—this does not appear to me sufficiently clear.

But, since that period, it has been decided by your Père Erade Bille, Professor of cases of conscience at Caen; that the cases in question have *not* the nature of sin; inasmuch as the probable opinions in their favor are progressively acquiring strength. He states this in his writings in 1644; in answer to which M. Dupré, Doctor and Professor of Caen, published his beautiful and well-known Dissertation. For, although Père Erade Bille acknowledges that the doctrine of Valentia (followed by Père Malhard, and condemned by the Sorbonne) "is opposed to the general feeling, is open in various ways to suspicion of Simony, and obnoxious to legal punishment, if detected," he nevertheless does not scruple to add, that it is an opinion, probable, and consequently safe, as regards the conscience, that there is no Simony in it; and therefore no sin. It is," he says, "a probable opinion, and one inculcated by many learned Catholics, that it is not Simony, and no sin, to give money, or any other temporal consideration for a benefice; either on the ground of acknowledgment, or, as a motive without which it would not be given; provided it be not an exact equivalent for the spirituality required."

Here then is all the proof that can be desired! And thus, my Fathers, you see by this concurrence of authorities, that Simony will be reduced within such narrow limits, that even *Simon Magus* himself—the Prototype of all Simoniacal purchasers—who desired to give money for the gift of the Holy Ghost;—and Gehazi also—the Prototype of Simonical venders, who received money for the performance of a miracle—that even these would be ex-

empted from the charge! For it is not to be doubted, that when Simon (in the Acts) offered the apostles money for their miraculous endowments, he used none of the terms of *buying*, and *selling*, and *price*; and did nothing more than offer his money as the *motive* for which the spiritual gifts were to be imparted to him. Which being (according to your writers) no Simony, he ought to have been exempted from the denunciation of St. Peter, had the apostle been duly instructed in your doctrine. This ignorance also must be regarded as a source of great wrong to Gehazi, when struck by Elisha with leprosy; for (receiving the largess of the Prince, after his miraculous cure, merely as a mark of his gratitude, and not an equivalent for the supernatural power which had effected the miracle) he might have compelled the prophet to restore him from the plague, under pain of a mortal sin; seeing he had acted only on the principles of so many profound theologians—principles on which your confessors are bound to absolve their penitents, and to wash them from that spiritual leprosy, of which the corporeal is a type!

Alas! my Reverend Fathers, it is but too easy to turn all this into matter of ridicule. Why you should thus expose yourselves to it, I know not; I might easily, with the same view, adduce other decisions; such as that of Escobar, in his ‘Practice of Simony,’ according to the Society of Jesus, tr. 6, ex. 1, N. 44. ‘Is it Simoniacal,’ he says, ‘for two ecclesiastics to make an agreement of this kind: give me your vote for my election to the office of Provincial, and I will give you mine for getting that of Prior? No.’ And this again, tr. 6, N. 14; ‘It is not

Simony to procure a benefice under a promise of money, if we have, in reality, no intention of PAYING it; for this is only a feigned Simony, and not more real than counterfeit gold is pure gold.' Here is indeed a subtilty of conscience! A man is supposed (adding *theft* to simony) to procure the benefice without payment—and yet without Simony! But I have not space to pursue this subject further, and must hasten to refute your third calumnious charge on the subject of Bankruptcies.

Nothing, my Fathers, can be more gross than this. You accuse me of imposition, on the ground of a certain sentiment of Lessius, not cited by myself, but brought forward by Escobar, in a passage quoted by me from *him*; and thus, even if it should be proved that Lessius did not hold the opinion attributed to him by Escobar, what can be more unjust than to visit this error upon me? If I quote Lessius and your other authors, as of *myself*, I am answerable for them. But Escobar, having collected the views of four and twenty of your Fathers, I ask you whether I ought to be held responsible for any thing but what I myself have quoted from him, and should be made to guarantee further all his questions from others? How unreasonable is this! And yet this is the point in question. I cited in my letter the following passage, very faithfully translated from Escobar, tr. 3, ex. 2, N. 163 (upon which you make no remark.) "May a bankrupt retain with a safe conscience a sufficiency of property to enable him to live respectably: 'ne indecoré vivat?' I reply with Lessius, Yes." 'Cum Lessio assero posse, &c.' Hereupon you affirm, that Lessius does *not* hold this opinion. Now, consider for a moment what it is to which you are

committing yourselves. If the fact be not as you state, you are guilty of imposition in asserting the contrary; if it be, then Escobar is the impostor. So that, in some way or the other, some Member of the Society is convicted of imposition. See the scandal you are causing! You know not how to trace things to their necessary consequences. You think you have only to fling about your malevolences, without considering upon whom they may be retaliated. Could you not have foreseen your difficulty in regard to Escobar, before you committed yourselves to such a statement? He would have set you right. It is not difficult to communicate with Valladolid where he is living, in excellent health,* occupied in completing his great work on Moral Philosophy, in *six volumes* (of the first of which I shall some of these days perhaps take an opportunity of giving you some account.) My first ten letters have been transmitted to him: you might also have communicated to him a statement of your difficulty, and I will answer for it he would have replied to it; for it cannot be doubted that he has himself seen the passage in question of Lessius, from whence he got the ‘ne indecoré vivat.’ Read it carefully yourselves, my Fathers, and you will find it as I have done, Book 2, ch. 16, N. 45; ‘Idem colligitur aperté ex juribus citatis, maxime quoad ea bona quæ post cessionem acquirit, de quibus is qui

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* Escobar. From all that is related by Alegambe of the Père Escobar, he seems to have been (in his way) a well-meaning, laborious, and devoted man. It is said that when he learnt how he was brought forward in the Provincial Letters he was delighted, and thought much more of himself than before. His portrait is in existence: it is striking, and shows him to have been a resolute and decided man, of thorough self-confidence. He died at Valladolid in July, 1669, at the age of 81. (Editor.)

debitor est etiam ex delicto, potest retinere quantum necessarium est, ut pro suâ conditione *non indecore vivat*. Petes an leges id permittant de bonis quæ tempore instantis cessionis habebat? Ita videtur colligi ex D.D."

I will not pause here to show that Lessius, in this dogma, abuses the sanction of the law, by which a bankrupt is allowed a mere subsistence, and not the means of an honourable maintenance.* It is sufficient to have justified Escobar from the charge against him, and more than was necessary. But you, reverend Fathers, have not done your duty; for the matter in question is to reply to that passage in Escobar, whose decisions are very inconvenient, inasmuch as, being independent of all that precedes and follows, and dealing in abstract dogmas, they are not subject to your distinctions. I have already quoted one entire passage, which permits "those who make compromises, to retain a portion of their property (even though unjustly acquired), for the respectable maintenance of their families." Upon which I felt myself compelled to make this comment in my letter; "By what strange species of charity do you maintain, that property shall belong rather to those who have acquired it by injustice, than to the lawful creditors?" This it is which calls for a reply; but then comes your difficulty; which you will seek in vain to elude by citing other passages from Lessius, quite beside the point. I ask you, can this decision of Lessius be conscientiously acted upon by one who has committed bankruptcy? And beware how you answer! If in the negative, I ask what becomes of your

* ' Vivre avec honneur.) Fr.)

Doctor, and your doctrine of probability? If in the affirmative, then I send you to the *courts of justice!*

I take leave of you, my reverend Fathers, in this dilemma; for I have left myself no space now to expose your next imposture, respecting the passage from Lessius upon homicide. Let this suffice for the present: more shall follow.

I shall also, on this occasion, make no reply to the false and scandalous reflections upon myself, with which you wind up each successive misrepresentation. They shall all be encountered in a succeeding letter; in which also, I hope effectually to open up the hidden sources from which your various calumnies are drawn.

Yet, Sirs, for your own sakes, I cannot but lament to see you resorting to such weapons. The wrongs that you inflict upon me, will not set at rest our controversies; and your menaces—of whatever description—shall never deter me from self-defence. You think yourselves sheltered by the impunity of power; but I stand on the vantage-ground of innocence and truth! Long and persevering may be the assaults of violence against those sacred bulwarks. No efforts of rude power can overthrow truth; they serve only to enhance her lustre; while truth's most transcendent radiance avails not to arrest the course of violence, and serves but to irritate it the more. When force opposes force, the stronger overpowers the weak; when controversies are arrayed against each other, those founded on justice and reason may silence the clamours of vanity and falsehood: but violence and truth will ever wage against each other a fruitless and interminable warfare. Yet, let it not then be concluded that their forces are

balanced, and their weapons tempered alike. There is between them this immeasurable difference, that violence traces a course limited and circumscribed by the resistless decree of God, which causes all its efforts to subserve the advancement of the sacred cause assailed. But truth shall remain ever unimpaired, and be victorious over all her enemies ; for she is immortal and omnipotent, like the Eternal himself !

*Refutation of the Reply of the Society to the preceding
(12th) Letter.*

SIR,

WHOEVER may be the party I am now addressing, and who has undertaken the cause of the Jesuits against a publication which exposes so fully the delinquencies of their moral system, you seem, by the eagerness with which you hasten to their succour, to be sensible of their weakness ; and herein your judgment is not to be impeached. But, if you entertain the belief that you have really succeeded in establishing their defence, your discretion, I must take leave to tell you, will not appear to be equally sound. I entertain, however, a better opinion of you ; and am satisfied that your aim is only to divert the author of the Letters from his object by a feigned attack. In this you have not been successful ; and, to my great satisfaction, the Thirteenth Letter is on the eve of appearing,

although he has made no reply to your strictures upon the 11th and 12th ; and, in fact, has scarcely bestowed a thought upon the writer. This leads me to hope that other and similar animadversions will remain disregarded by him. Doubt not, Sir, that he would have found you an easy antagonist. You have seen how he has dealt with the Society in general ; what difficulty could he have found in encountering yourself individually ? You may judge of this by what I am about to remark, in answer to your strictures upon his Twelfth Letter.

I shall here leave unnoticed all the reproaches you have directed against the author of the Letters. He has himself promised to reply to them ; and I suspect he will do it after such a fashion, as will leave to you little more than the trophies of shame and remorse. It will not be difficult for him to overwhelm with confusion mere individuals such as yourself and your brother Jesuits, who indecently presume to usurp the authority of the Church ; to treat as heretics whomsoever you please ; while you are impotent to defend yourselves against the just reproaches which their flagitious maxims have drawn upon you. For myself, I shall restrict myself to the refutation of those new impostures to which you have resorted, for the justification of your casuists. We will begin with Vasquez.

You make no reply to all that the author of the Letters has cited in proof of his pernicious doctrines of almsgiving, and you weakly accuse him (the author) of four falsehoods, the first of which is, that he has suppressed from the passage cited out of Vasquez, in the 6th Letter, these words, "*Statum quem licitè possunt acquirere ;*"

and has been guilty of dissimulation respecting the reproaches brought against him thereupon.

I see plainly, Sir, that you have been led to believe, on the faith of your worthy friends the Jesuits, that these words *are* to be found in the passage quoted by the author of the Letters; for had you known that they are actually *not* there, you would rather have blamed these Fathers for bringing the charge against him, than felt surprise that he had not condescended to reply to so frivolous an objection. But do not put so much confidence in them. Be assured you will be taken in. Look, for yourself, into the passage quoted by the author. You will find it, De Elem. ch. 4, N. 14; but you will not find in it any of the words alleged to be suppressed; nay, you will be astonished to find them occurring just fourteen pages *previously*! After this, you will no doubt feel you have cause to complain of these good Fathers; and will see, that to justify a charge against this writer of suppressing the words in question, he ought to be bound to introduce passages extending through fourteen pages *in folio*, into a letter consisting of eight pages *in quarto*, a space also in which he has been accustomed to give about thirty or forty quotations. This is not quite reasonable.

This then may suffice to prove that it is you who are the real authors of the misrepresentation; and equally easy is the conviction of Vasquez. This Jesuit has been charged with overthrowing the precept of Christ, which enjoins the rich to give alms of their superfluity; by maintaining, "that what the rich retain for the maintenance of their station in life, or that of their relatives, is

no superfluity ; and therefore, that people of the world, and even Sovereigns themselves, scarcely ever have any superfluous means." This position it is—"that people of the world scarcely ever have a superfluity"—which absolves them from the duty of alms-giving ; since it is a necessary consequence, that having nothing superfluous, they are bound to give nothing away. If the author of the Letters had drawn this inference, you would have had some ground for pretending that it was not deducible from the principle, "that what the rich retain for maintaining their station, or that of their relations, is not to be called superfluity." But he has found it in full detail in Vasquez. He has read these words, so opposed to the spirit of the gospel and to Christian moderation : "Scarcely is superfluity of means to be found among people of the world, or even among Sovereigns." He has also read the following sentiment, quoted in the 12th Letter : "We are scarcely bound to give alms at all, if we are bound to give it only of our superfluity." And what is curious, is, that this expression is found in the very same place that contains the words, "*Statum quem licitè possunt acquirere ;*" by means of which you pretend to make your escape. You throw away your manœuvres upon the principle in question, since you are obliged to be silent respecting the consequences formally deduced by Vasquez ; and which are sufficient to annul the precept of Christ, as he is in fact charged with doing. If Vasquez had drawn such conclusions erroneously, he would have added unsoundness of judgment to error in morals ; and he would not have been less blameable, nor the precept of Christ less impugned. But it will appear, by the refuta-

tion of your next charge against the author of the Letters, that these evil consequences are properly deduced from the bad principle laid down by Vasquez in the same place; and that the Jesuit in question has not offended against the laws of sound reason, but only against those of the *gospel*!

Your second slanderous charge, "of having dissembled after he had been convinced of error," alleges that he has omitted the words in question designedly, for the purpose of misrepresenting the Father's sentiments, and drawing from them this scandalous conclusion, "that," according to Vasquez, "those who have much ambition can possess no superfluity." Here I must tell you, Sir, in one word, that nothing can be more unfounded than this accusation. The Jesuits themselves have never complained of this inference; and yet you reproach the author of the Letters with not having answered an objection that was never before brought against him. But if you think yourself more clear-sighted than the whole of their body, it will be easy to cure you of a self-complacency, which is really injurious to this great fraternity. For how can you deny that, from the principle of Vasquez, viz. "that what is reserved for the maintenance of our condition in society, or that of our relations, is not to be called superfluity," the conclusion is unavoidable, that an ambitious person cannot have superfluous means. I willingly allow you to add the restriction expressed in another passage, which is, that we must never seek to improve our condition, except by lawful means; "*Statum quem licitè possunt acquirere.*" This by no means impeaches the correctness of the inference, which you object to as unfounded.

It is quite true, that there are rich persons who may be allowed to improve their condition by lawful methods. An expectation, on the part of the individual, of promoting the public good, may sometimes justify the wish, provided the object be not so much to promote his own interest as the honour of God, and the general welfare. But how rarely does the spirit of the Gospel—without which no pure desires can exist—suggest such motives as these to the rich and worldly? That gracious influence more usually prompts to diminish the encumbrances which check our aspirations after heavenly good; and sounds in our ears the Gospel-warning, “He that exalteth himself shall be abased.” Thus, the desires so prevalent in most men of the present day, continually to raise themselves and their connexions in station (even though by lawful means,) are ordinarily nothing more than the instigations of earthly cupidity and ambition; for it is a gross error to suppose that ambition to rise in condition is only evinced by the employment of unlawful means. And it is this error which St. Augustine condemns in his work ‘On Patience,’ ch. 3, wherein he says, “The love of wealth and reputation is a vanity sanctioned by the world; and it is supposed that avarice, ambition, luxury, dissipation, are innocent, because they do not involve crimes and irregularity forbidden by the laws.” Ambition consists in desiring elevation and honour for their own sake, as avarice is a love of money for itself. If pursued by unjust means, these objects become more criminal; but you do not, by merely substituting lawful means, render such propensities innocent. Now Vasquez does not refer, on this occasion, to instances in which certain

persons of substance desire to improve their condition, and "are in the probable way to do so," as Cardinal Cajetan says. If he had done so, it would have been absurd to conclude (as he does) that people of the world rarely have a superfluity; for those very rare occasions, which can seldom occur (perhaps only once or twice in a life,) and that, only in the instances of a very small number of wealthy persons, to whom God has revealed that they shall not injure themselves by advancing in station for the good of others—these instances, I say, cannot invalidate the position that the larger number of rich persons enjoy much of superfluity. But he speaks of a vague and indefinite love of aggrandizement, and a desire of elevation that knows no bounds; for had it been duly limited, the rich would have been conscious of possessing superfluity, before such a point had been attained.

And thus, at last, he brings himself to believe that the desire in question is so universal and so allowable, that very few wealthy persons can in reality possess any superfluity.

You ought then, Sir, to understand once for all, that it is this love of aggrandizement—this effort perpetually to rise above our fellows and associates, even by lawful means—'ad statum quem licitè possunt acquirere'—that the author of the Letters has designated as ambition; for it is the name which the Fathers give to it, and which the world itself does not disown. He has not thought himself bound to adopt the common trick of such casuists—that of banishing vices by their real names, but retaining them under others. If then the words 'Statum quem

licitè possunt acquirere' had been in the passage he adduced, he would not have been obliged to suppress them in order to prove it to be criminal. It is in combining them that he justly condemns Vasquez for the position he lays down, that the ambitious can have no superfluity; and he is not the first who has drawn such a conclusion from this doctrine. M. Du Val had done it before him (though in less formal terms), while combatting this maxim—Vol. 2. q. 8. Sp. 576; "It would follow," he says, "that they who aspired to the highest station, that is, who had the largest share of ambition, would possess no superfluity, although enjoying much more than they needed for their present rank—'*Sequeretur eum qui hanc dignitatem cuperet, seu qui majori ambitione duceretur, habendo plurima suprâ decentiam sui statûs, non habiturum superflua.*'"

Thus, Sir, you have been utterly unsuccessful in the two first charges of misrepresentation brought against the author of the Letters; let us now see whether the rest are better founded. Of these, the one is, that he has stated Vasquez to maintain that the rich are not bound to give of what is required for maintaining their condition in society. The refutation of this charge is easy; it is simply that it is *false*, and that what he has stated is the direct reverse. No other proof is required of this than the passage which you yourselves produce, only three lines lower down, in which he cites Vasquez as saying, "that the rich are bound to give of what is necessary for them, on certain occasions."

Your last complaint is not less unfounded. Let us look at the substance of it. The author of the Letters had

referred to two decisions of doctrine in Vasquez ; the one " that the rich are not bound either by duty, or charity, to give of their superfluity (and still less of what they need themselves) in any cases of ordinary necessity of the poor." The other, " that the occasions on which they are bound to give out of that which they need themselves, are so rare, as that they scarcely ever occur." To the first and most flagrant of these decisions you have no reply to offer : what then do you make of the second ? You join them together ; and, contriving some paltry evasion as to the latter, you endeavour to make it appear that you have produced an answer to the two. Now it shall be my endeavour to unravel what you purposely perplex ; and I ask you, is it not true that Vasquez teaches, that the rich are never bound to give of their superfluity, either by necessity, justice, or charity, in the ordinary exigencies of the poor ? Has not the author demonstrated it by the express words of Vasquez ; " Corduba teaches (he says) that those who have abundance are bound to give in ordinary cases of necessity, in order in some measure to conform to the precept." (Observe that the question here is not whether the duty be one of justice or charity, but of absolute obligation.) See then the decision of Vasquez hereon ; " But this does not please me—'*sed hoc non placet*'—for we have proved the contrary, in opposition to Cajetan and Navarre." To this then you have given no reply, and have left your Jesuit friends convicted of a dogma diametrically opposed to the Gospel !

And as to his second decision, " that the rich are to give on such infrequent occasions, as almost never can occur, of that which is acquired for their own wants," the

author of the Letters has not less clearly proved it by the numerous conditions which the Jesuit collects together to constitute the obligation; viz. that the case, being one of urgent necessity, can receive relief from no *other* quarter, and that the necessity must be attended with *mortal* danger to the person or the reputation. The question is then asked, whether these various contingencies are of frequent occurrence in a place like Paris; and next he presses the Jesuits with this argument, "That Vasquez, permitting the poor to rob the rich, under the *same* circumstances in which he requires the rich to relieve the poor, must have supposed, either that those circumstances were of very rare occurrence, or that the latter would be commonly allowed to resort to robbery." What answer have you given, I ask, to this? You have concealed all these conditions, and have simply reported three passages from Vasquez; in the two first of which he says, that the rich are bound to help the poor in urgent need; a position which the author of the Letters expressly acknowledges; but you have taken care not to add, that he mixes up with the precept such conditions, as that the necessity for alms-giving will scarcely ever arise; which is the matter actually in question.

The third passage upon which you comment states solely, that the rich are not bound to give alms even in cases of extreme necessity, that is, if a human being be at the point of death, because they are very rare: whence you maintain it to be false that the cases in which Vasquez enjoins alms-giving are very rare. But you deceive yourself, Sir: you can conclude no otherwise; since, if Vasquez does not apply the *term* 'rare' to the occasions of

giving alms, he renders them such in reality by the restrictions he imposes upon them. In this, however, he does but follow the system of the entire company. The member in question had to soothe the rich, who choose to be under very slender obligation to give alms; and to satisfy the Church, which makes large demands upon them for such objects. According to the method of the Society, therefore, he wished to please all parties, and he has succeeded. On the one side, he insists upon conditions of such rare occurrence, that the most sordid mind must be contented; on the other, he conceals from view the infrequency, in order to give satisfaction to the Church. It is immaterial therefore whether Vasquez have used the term 'rare' or not. The charge is not as to a name. He was too subtle a Jesuit to call bad things by a bad name. But the question is, whether he makes them 'rare' in reality by his restrictions; and this it is which the Author of the Letters has so clearly established, that no resource is left to you, but that which never fails—dissimulation and silence.

All that you subsequently add, as to the subtlety of Vasquez's mind, in the different senses in which he uses the terms "necessary" and "superfluous," is pure deception. He has never (any more than other theologians) treated of them but in two senses. There is, according to him, what is "necessary for nature, and necessary for station; superfluous for nature, and superfluous for station." But to constitute superfluity for station, he maintains that it must be such, not only for the *present*, but also for such *future* condition as wealth may enable men to attain to for themselves or their families, by law-

ful means ! Thus, according to Vasquez, all that is retained for improving our condition is simply necessary for station, and only superfluous for nature ; whence it follows (as the author has demonstrated) that the occasions in which the duty of alms-giving will be incumbent, can scarcely ever arise.

It is needless here to add any thing to the remarks of the author of the letters upon the comparison between Vasquez and Cajetan. I will only, in passing, give you warning that you misrepresent both the Cardinal and Vasquez in saying that “ contrary to what he had stated in the Tract upon Alms-giving, he teaches in that upon indulgences, that the omission of the duty to give of our abundance does not exceed “ venial sin.” Read it, Sir, for yourself, and trust not so implicitly to Jesuits, either dead or living ! You will then find that Cajetan formally inculcates the direct reverse ; and after saying, that there are only extreme necessities (among which he comprehends also the greater part of what Vasquez calls “ urgent,”) which involve mortal sin, he makes this exception : “ unless it be to possess superfluous property ;—*seclusa superfluitate bonorum.*”

I now proceed, with you, to the doctrine on Simony. The author of the Letters has had but one object in view, viz., to prove that the society holds this principle ; that, by the laws of conscience, it is not Simony to give a spirituality for a temporal consideration, provided the temporality be not the principal motive in the transaction, and be not received as its price. * And to prove this, he has in his Twelfth Letter, produced entire, a passage from Valentia, which establishes the doctrine so clearly, that

you have nothing to advance in reply to it; any more than to his further proofs from Escobar, Erade Belle, and others; who all declare the same thing. This unanimity of opinion is sufficient (according to the doctrine of "*Probability*," which your whole body maintain) to bring home these views to the Society, inculcated as they are by so many learned provincials. You must confess then, that in leaving undisturbed, as you have done, the sentiments of all the other Jesuits, and demurring only to that of Tannerus, you have wholly failed in impeaching the correctness of the author of the Letters whom you select as the object of your attack, and in justifying the Society, which you have undertaken to defend.

But—to leave nothing in doubt upon this head—I maintain that you are in error as to Tannerus, as well as all the others. First, you cannot deny that he says, generally, "it is not Simony, in conscience—'in foro conscientiae'—to bestow a spirituality for a temporal consideration, when the temporality is not the principal motive, nor even the price." And when he says it is not Simony, "in conscience," he means that it is not such, either by Divine rules, or by positive law. This is the general rule of Tannerus, to which he makes one exception, viz., "in cases designated by law, it is a Simony by actual law, or a Simony by presumption." Now, as an exception cannot be co-extensive with the rule, it follows, necessarily, that the general maxim, as above-cited, applies in some cases of spiritual-transfers; and thus, that there are spiritualities which may be bestowed without Simony, by actual law for temporal considerations, by exchanging the term "price," for that of "motive."

The author of the Letters has thought fit to apply the doctrine of Valentia and Tannerus to the case of benefices. But it is quite unimportant to his argument that you make a change ; and allow, instead of benefices, the sacraments, or ecclesiastical offices to be bartered for money. He considers both to be alike immoral, and gives you the choice of either. It would seem, Sir, that you are disposed to make the election, and would have it understood that it is not simoniacal, to repeat masses (for instance) when the chief motive is the money to be received for the performance : and this impression is unavoidable, from your own statements, as to the practice of the Church in Paris. Now if you had meant to say simply, that the faithful are at liberty to offer of their temporal goods to those who minister to them in spiritual, and that those who "serve the altar may live of the altar," none would contradict you ; but this is quite beside the question. The real point, is this : is a priest, whose only motive in offering the sacrifice is the money he receives for the office, guilty, in the sight of God, of Simony ? You, (following the doctrine of Tannerus) would acquit him ; but can you do so, on the principles of Christian faith ? "If Simony," says Peter Le Chautre, one of the brightest ornaments of the Church of Paris, "be so flagrant and damnable in matters connected with the sacraments, how much more so must it be in regard to the very sacraments themselves ; and chiefly that of the Eucharist, where Jesus himself, the source and spring of all grace, is received ? Simon Magus," continues this holy man, "having been repulsed by Simon Peter, might have said, 'You repel me now, but the time will come when I shall

triumph over you, and the whole body of the Church. I shall establish my empire upon the altar itself; and when the angels shall assemble on the one side, adoring the body of the Redeemer, I shall stand over against them, instructing the minister of the altar to form the elements, that complete that body, for money!'" Yet the crime which this pious theologian so sternly condemns, consists only in the cupidity which renders the temporal consideration, for which holy offices are performed, the chief object in such performance. And this leads him generally to remark, "that holy offices (which he calls '*ouvrages de la droite*,') being performed through the love of money constitutes Simony—'*Opus dexteræ operatum causâ pecuniæ acquirendæ, parit Simoniam.*'" What then would he have said, had he heard that atrocious maxim of the casuists, which you defend, "It is lawful for a priest to renounce, for a small sum of money, all the spiritual benefits that he might expect from the sacrifice"?

You see then, that if this be the whole of your defence of Tannerus, you prove only that the falsehood of his doctrine is aggravated by its impiety; and what then becomes of the exception to be made in his favor?

It was to get rid of all these refinements that the author of the Letters enquired of the Jesuits, "Would it be Simony by the rules of conscience, according to your authors, to bestow a benefice of 4000 livres annual value, in consideration of a payment of 10,000 francs, if it be in the way of motive and not of price?" To this he has demanded an answer, without any phrasology of "positive rights," or resorting to scholastic terms and gram-

matrical subtleties, which nobody understands or cares for. This you profess now to do, and have given this reply : "That apart from the rules of law, it would not be Simony; in the same manner as there would be no sin in not attending mass on festivals, if the Church had not ordained it." That is to say, it is only Simony because the Church makes it so; and, but for the actual law, it would be an innocent act. To this I reply,

First, you do not properly answer the question that is put to you. The author asked, "Is it Simony, according to the *Jesuit* authorities, quoted by him?" The question is not at all as to your opinion: what weight does that carry? Are you a learned doctor? I much question it? The point is, as to the opinions of Valentia, Tannerus, Sanchez, Escobar, Erade Bille, all men of unquestionable learning. It is for them that you are called upon to answer. The author of the Letters affirms that you cannot maintain the case in question to be Simony (according to the laws of conscience) by the rules of these Jesuits. Now as to Valentia, Sanchez, Escobar, and the others, you leave them to answer for themselves. You make a show of fighting in favor of Tannerus, but you see that it is unavailing; and, after all, it remains clear that the Society teaches, that a spiritual charge may, without *conscientious* Simony, be given, for a temporal consideration, provided the temporality be only the inclining motive, but not a price. This is all that was contended for.

Secondly, I maintain that your reply involves a flagrant impiety. What! Will you dare, Sir, to say, that, apart from the ecclesiastical law there would be no Simony in giving money, though in this circuitous way, for admis-

sion into the offices of the Church ; that before the canons had pronounced it crime, money was a lawful way of entrance, provided it were not given as a price ; and that thus, St. Peter's condemnation of Simon Magus was harsh and rash, seeing it was not clear whether the money he offered, was in the way of price or only of motive ?

To what school, I ask, would you send us, to learn this doctrine ? Not that of Jesus Christ, who ever taught his disciples, "freely to give as they had freely received ;" and who in those words, as Peter Le Chantre remarks, in verb. Abb. C. 36, "forbids every species of present or compensation, by agreement, or without agreement ; for God sees the heart." It is not to the school of the Church, for she treats not only as criminals, but as heretics, all who employ money for the obtaining ecclesiastical preferments, and designates such traffic—by whatever artifice palliated—not as a violation of one of its positive laws, but, as heresy—"Simoniacam Hæresim !"

The school, then, in which these principles are taught—be it, that it is not Simony by positive law ; or that it is such only by presumption, or that it is not sinful to give money as a motive, but only as a price—such a school is no other than that of Gehazi and of Simon Magus ! It is that school, in which those two first traffickers in holy things—doomed to execration in all ages—may alone be acquitted of guilt ; a school in which, flinging to cupidity the reins of its basest desires and unholiest acts, its pupils are taught to evade the laws of the Omniscient by changes of words, while action remains unaltered ! But let the disciples of that school learn in what way the great Pope, Innocent III., in his Missive to

the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1199, has launched his indignant anathemas against the damnable subtleties of those, "who, blinded by the lust of gain, pretend to palliate the crime of Simony under reputable names ;—‘ Simoniam sub honesto nomine palliant ;’—as if the change of a name could alter the nature of the crime, or the punishments due to it. But God is not mocked," (adds the Pope) "and if these followers of Simon could escape in this life the retribution they deserve, they shall not escape in another the everlasting punishment reserved for such guilt ! No well-sounding names can extenuate crime, nor shall the disguise of a word conceal its real nature : ‘ Cum nec honestas nominis criminis malitiam palliabit, nec vox poterit abolere reatum.’ ”

The last question between us is, that relating to bankrupts. Here I cannot but admire your hardihood. The Jesuits, whom you defend, had very imprudently objected to the discussion of the authority of Lessius, as adduced by Escobar ; for the author of the Letters cited Lessius only on Escobar’s authority, and attributed to the *latter* alone the decision complained of ; viz. "that bankrupts may retain a sufficiency of their property for competent maintenance, *although that property may have been obtained by notorious speculation and crime.*" It is, therefore, as to Escobar alone, that he has pressed them, either openly to disavow this maxim, or to acknowledge that they hold it ; and—in the latter alternative—"I send them," he says, "to the laws." It is to them that they must make answer ; and not shelter themselves under the plea that Lessius (with whom we have nothing to do) is of a different opinion from Escobar, who alone is the party

in question. Do you suppose that to evade an inquiry is to answer it? Do not thus deceive yourself. You shall answer for Escobar, before we proceed to Lessius. It is not, however, that I shrink from encountering him also; and I promise you, hereafter, a very full exposition of the doctrine of Lessius upon bankruptcy, and thorough proof that it is as much opposed to the Law, as to the Sorbonne.

Our controversy, with the help of God, shall not stop here; but it shall be now suspended, on my part, till you have replied to the points in question respecting Escobar. You shall give satisfaction upon this, before we enter upon other matters. Escobar is the first in order; he shall be disposed of, in spite of all your evasions. Be assured that Lessius' turn shall soon follow!*

* French Editor's note. Although by a different hand, and very inferior in merit to the Provincial Letters, this article seemed to me too interesting to be omitted in the present edition.

. If, as above stated, this letter be by a different hand, and not, as is possible, under the assumed character of a colleague, in order to give variety to the correspondence, it may be doubted whether it should be regarded as very inferior. It is full of point and energy, and may remind us of the fire of Demosthenes, interposing between the more flowing and graceful rhetoric of Cicero; or—in modern days—the sparkle and impetuosity of Fox or Sheridan breaking in upon the measured dignity of Pitt. (Transl.)

LETTER XIII.

THAT THE DOCTRINE OF LESSIUS UPON HOMICIDE IS THE SAME AS THAT OF VICTORIA. HOW EASY IS THE TRANSITION FROM SPECULATION TO PRACTICE. THE REASON OF THE JESUITS AVAILING THEMSELVES OF THIS FUTILE DISTINCTION, AND THEIR CULPABILITY IN SO DOING.

MY REVERED FATHERS.

Sept. 30, 1656.

I HAVE just seen your last paper, in which you pursue your charges of imposture; but state that you have now done with that kind of accusation, and intend to adopt a different method of defending yourselves, viz. by showing that there are many casuists, besides those of your fraternity, whose views are equally lax with your own. I have now before me the whole of the misrepresentations which I have to reply to; and as the fourth, where we left off, is on the subject of homicide, it will tend to convenience, while answering you on that point, to dispose, at the same time, of No. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, which are all upon the same subject.

I have then, in the present letter, to maintain the fidelity of my quotations, in contradiction to the falsehood with which you charge me. But as you have dared to

maintain in your writings, "that the sentiments of your authors on the subject of murder are conformable to the decisions of the Popes and of ecclesiastical law," you compel me to enter upon a refutation of a proposition, so audacious in itself, and so injurious to the Church. It is incumbent upon me to demonstrate that *her* holy institutions are untainted by your corruptions, in order that heretics may not avail themselves of your errors, to draw inferences dishonourable to her purity. And thus, by placing in contrast, on the one hand, your pernicious maxims, and, on the other, the canons of the Church, by which they are condemned, it will be seen at once, both what should be avoided, and what obeyed.

Your fourth misrepresentation is on the subject of a decision upon the question of murder, which you charge me with falsely attributing to Lessius. It is this: "A man who has received a blow, may pursue his enemy at the instant, even sword in hand; not to revenge himself, but for the purpose of repairing his honour." Upon which you reply: "The opinion in question is one of the Casuist Victoria." Now this again is not the matter of dispute, for it is no contradiction to say that it is jointly that of Victoria and Lessius; because Lessius himself says that it is also that of Navarre, and your Père Henriquez; who teach, "that a person receiving a blow may instantly pursue his antagonist, and give him as many blows as he may think necessary for the reparation of his honour." The question, then, is only, whether Lessius is agreed in opinion with these authors, as well as his contemporaries? And, therefore, you add, "Lessius only refers to this opinion for the purpose of confuting it;" and

thus I attribute a sentiment to him which he brings forward only to oppose—an act, of all others the most mean and disgraceful in a writer. But I maintain that he quotes it, for the purpose of expressing his agreement with it. It is a question of fact, which may easily be determined. We will therefore see how you establish your position, and you shall then see how I persist in maintaining mine.

To prove that Lessius does not hold the opinion in question, you say he condemns it in practice; and for proof of that, you produce an extract from his works, Book 2, c. 9, n. 82, as follows: ‘I condemn this practice.’ I acknowledge that if you look through Lessius (N. 82) as referred to by you, you will find these words. But what will you say, my Fathers, when I tell you that in this place he is treating of a question wholly *different* from the one in dispute; and that the opinion, which he here says he in practice condemns, is entirely *unconnected* with that we are discussing. You have but to open the book, to ascertain the fact: his argument is to the following effect.

He is treating of the question ‘whether it is lawful to take life for a blow?’ (No. 79,) and he concludes the subject at No. 80, without a single word in condemnation. This question being finished, he begins a new one at Art. 81, viz. ‘Whether life may be taken for *slandorous language*.’ It is respecting this question that he uses at (No. 82) the words we have quoted from him, ‘I condemn the practice.’

Now, my Reverend Fathers, is it not disgraceful to find you producing these expressions, in order to cause it to

be believed that Lessius condemns the opinion, that homicide may be perpetrated in revenge for a *blow* ; and that, resting upon this solitary proof, you should triumphantly exclaim, as you have done, ‘ Several *distinguished* persons in Paris have already ascertained, by a perusal of Lessius, this scandalous falsehood ; and have thus been enabled to judge what degree of belief is due to this calumnious writer.’

What, Sirs ! is it thus you abuse the confidence reposed in you by these eminent personages ? To prove to them that Lessius does not hold the doctrine in question, you open his book at a part where he condemns *another* ; and impose on the credulity of persons who are incapable of suspecting your sincerity. I doubt not, my good Fathers, that, for the success of this flagrant artifice, you have availed yourselves with good effect of your own doctrine of ‘ Equivocation,’ and while reading the passage ‘ *aloud*,’ you said ‘ in a *whisper*’ that it had reference to a different matter. But I may be allowed to doubt whether this procedure, however satisfactory to your consciences, will satisfy the just reproaches which will be made you by these honourable persons, when they discover the imposition that has been practised upon them.

Take care, then, I pray you, to prevent their seeing my letters ; for this is the only way in which you can much longer preserve your credit. I do not take this precaution with *yours* : I send them round to all my friends : I wish the whole world to see them. And I believe we are both in the right. For, as to yourselves, after trumpeting so publicly the refutation of my fourth misrepresentation, what will be your situation, when it is

found that, to make good your case, you have substituted one passage for another? Naturally will it be judged, that if you had been able to find what you wanted in the part where Lessius treats of the quotation at issue, you would not have sought it elsewhere; and that you have had recourse to this method, only because you could find nothing else favorable to your object. You desired to discover in Lessius what you stated in your "Imposture," p. 10, Lig. 12,—“That he does not allow this opinion to be speculatively probable.” Now Lessius says expressly, in the close of his Discussion, N. 80: “The opinion—that life may be taken for a blow—is speculatively probable.” Is not this, word for word, the opposite of your assertion? And who but must admire the audacity with which you adduce from him in express terms a sentiment the very reverse of the real one? So that—instead of opposing—Lessius is proved by his own words, distinctly to sanction it.

You would desire to represent Lessius as “condemning the practice” in question; and (as I have said already) not a word of condemnation is to be found in his Treatise; but these are his actual expressions: “It seems that this practice ought not *lightly* to be allowed;—‘in praxi non videtur facile permittenda.’” Is this, Sirs, the language of a man who condemns a doctrine? Is not the just conclusion rather—since nothing to the contrary is stated—that, although the practice is not lightly to be sanctioned, it may sometimes (even, if rarely) be allowed? And, as if he would teach the whole world when it may be allowed, and relieve persons receiving the offence in question from inconvenient scruples, as not knowing ex-

actly the occasions on which they may practically be indulged in committing the murders in question, he is careful to prescribe what should be avoided, in order to carry the doctrine into practice with a safe conscience. "It seems," he says, "that it ought not to be lightly allowed, on account of the danger of its being practiced through hatred, or for revenge, or in excess; or, lest it should occasion *too many murders*."

From all this then it is clear that this species of homicide is in practice fully allowed by Lessius, provided these inconvenient consequences be avoided; that is, provided it be done without malice, not in revenge, and without occasioning too *large a number* of homicides. Do you wish, my Fathers, for an instance? I can furnish you with one sufficiently recent. It is that of the blow of Compiègne.* And you will allow that the person receiving it, gave proof by his conduct, that he was sufficiently master of his feelings of hatred and revenge. It was only necessary for him then further to take care that no *excessive* amount of murders should ensue—and you well know it is so rare an occurrence for Jesuits to inflict blows upon officers in the royal household, that there was not much reason to fear that a single homicide on this occasion would have brought others in its train. You cannot therefore deny that this Jesuit might have been killed with a safe conscience; and the offender in so doing, would in no way have acted in violation of the doctrine of Lessius. And, indeed, my good Fathers, he in all probability would have done so, had he been versed in the

* This seems to refer to some occurrence of that day, of which no particular explanation is given in the text. (Transl.)

lessons of your school—had he learnt of Escobar, “that a man receiving a blow is regarded as dishonoured till he has succeeded in *taking the life* of the party inflicting it.” But there is reason to believe that the instruction of a very different kind, which had been received by him from an ecclesiastic, not holding, indeed, a high station in your esteem, contributed in no small degree, on the occasion referred to, to save the *life* of a member of your own fraternity!

Let us hear no more, then, of the inconvenient results which are to be avoided in encounters of this kind; and (avoiding which) the homicide, according to Lessius, is in practice allowable. These have been thoroughly treated by your several authors, quoted by Escobar in his “Practice of Homicide, according to the Jesuits’ Society, tr. 1, ex. 7, N. 48: “Is it lawful,” he says, “to kill one who has inflicted a blow upon you?” Lessius says, it is lawful speculatively, but practically it is not to be recommended—‘non consulendum in praxi;’—on account of the risk of its giving rise to animosities, or murders, dangerous to public welfare. But others are of opinion that if these evil consequences be avoided, the practice is lawful and safe;—‘in praxi probabilem et tutam judicant Henriquez, &c.’ This is the way in which your opinions rise step by step towards probability. For, at last, the permission is given without any distinction of speculation and practice, as follows: “It is lawful on receiving a blow to retaliate on the instant with the sword, not in a *spirit of revenge*, but for the preservation of honour.” This is prescribed by your brethren at Caen, in 1644, in their published writings, laid by the University before the

Parliament, on presenting its third petition against your doctrine of Homicide, as appears in p. 389 of the book at that time published on the subject.

Observe then, I pray you, that your own authors overthrow, of themselves, the frivolous distinction which they had attempted to draw between speculation and practice, so justly ridiculed by the University; and which is nothing more than one of those ingenious devices of your policy that ought to be exposed. For, besides that this furnishes a clue to your 14th, 16th, 17th and 18th charges, it can never be otherwise than instructive to unravel, one after another, the intricate principles of this mysterious system.

Whenever you have taken upon you to decide cases of conscience, such as these, in a lenient and accommodating manner, the first point has been to ascertain those in which religion only is concerned,—such as contrition, penitence, the love of the Deity, and all such things as especially affect a tender conscience. But then, you were met by other cases in which the public welfare had a joint interest with religion, such as usury, bankruptcy, homicide and the like; and it has been matter of poignant concern to those who are really attached to the Church, to find you, on numberless occasions in which the interests of religion only are involved, overthrowing her rules, without reserve, distinction, or fear; as in your audacious decisions upon penitence and the love of God; and this, because you too well knew that the world is not the scene where the Great Ruler of all things is wont openly to vindicate his justice. But in matters in which the State has an interest equally with religion, your apprehensions of human jurisprudence have led you to divide (as it

were) your decisions, and distribute them into two separate compartments, the one you call "speculative," in which, viewing crimes in themselves, without reference to public interests, but *only* to the offended laws of God, you sanction them without scruple. Thus you set yourselves in opposition to the judgment of God. The other, you call "practical;" wherein, considering the injury that may accrue to society, and fearing the severity of magisterial rebuke, you affect occasionally to discountenance the commission of those murders and other crimes, to which you have given your speculative sanction; in this way you contrive to keep on good terms with the Judges. Thus, for instance, on the question, "whether it is lawful to kill another for slander," your authors, Filiutius tr. 29, Cap. 3, N. 52, Reginaldus 1, 28, Ch. 5, N. 63, and others, reply: "*Speculatively* it is lawful,—‘*ex probabili opinione licet*’; but I do not approve of it *practically*, on account of the large number of murders which would ensue, to the detriment of public interests, if all slanderers were to be killed; so that taking life for this cause would expose persons to public justice."

We have here a specimen of your opinions, under this kind of subtle reservation; by which you *merely* overthrow the sanction of religion, while you avoid doing serious injury to the State.

In this you think yourselves safe. You suppose that the repute in which you are held in the Church will screen from punishment your offences against truth; and that your precautions to prevent your sanctions being carried out too easily in practice, will keep you in safety from the magistrate, who, not concerning himself with niceties of

conscience, takes cognizance only of external conduct. Thus, an opinion which would be condemned in practice, is enunciated with safety as speculative only. But, the foundation being laid in this manner, it becomes easy to build upon it your whole system. Infinite was the distance between the Divine interdict against murder, and the speculative permission to the act conceded by your writers. But, practically, the interval is reduced to almost nothing. It was required only to demonstrate that what is thus allowed in theory, should become also lawful in practice. Reasons for this will be found in abundance : you have already discovered them in some of the most difficult of your cases. Would you learn, my Fathers, by what process they have been arrived at ? You have but to follow the reasoning of Escobar, who has plainly decided the point in the first of the six volumes of his "Grand Moral Theology," before referred to ; in which he seems to hold views entirely different from those in his "Selection from the Twenty-four Elders." Instead of considering, as in the former work, that opinions might be held in speculation which were not carried into practice, he has since then come to an opposite conclusion ; and has fully developed it in the latter work ; so much does the doctrine of probability, as well as every individual opinion, acquire strength by time.

Listen to his words in Prælog. C. 3, N. 15 ; " I cannot see," he says, " how a thing which is lawful in speculation should not be so in practice, since what may be right practically depends upon what is believed to be so in theory ; and the two differ, only as cause differs from effect. Speculation is what determines action. Whence

it follows, that we may, with a safe conscience, carry into practice whatever opinions are determined to be speculatively probable ; and that, even with greater security than in the case of those who have been subjected to this speculative examination.”

In truth, Reverend Sirs, the reasoning of your champion Escobar is sometimes not wanting in force. There is indeed so intimate a connexion between speculation and practice, that when once the one has taken root, the transition is easy to the undisguised reality. This is exemplified in the licence to kill for a blow ; which, from simple theory, has been, by Lessius, boldly advanced to a practice, which may not, however, with *too great facility be allowed* ; and, thence, by Escobar, to an allowable practice.* Since which your learned Fathers of Caen, as we have already seen, have carried it out to a plenary permission, without any distinction of theory and practice.

Thus it is that you advance, step by step, your opinions. If they were to appear at once in all their naked deformity, they would inspire unmixed horror ; but their slow and stealthy progress renders them familiar to the mind, and mitigates their atrocity. In this way, the sanction of murder—that crime so abhorrent both to the State and to the Church, is insinuated first into the Church, and from the Church finds its way into the State.

Similar has been the progress of the opinion, that life may be taken for the offence of slander. At the present time the sanction has obtained without any distinction. I should not pause to cite here the passages bearing upon

* ‘ Une pratique facile.’ (Fr.)

it from your Fathers, were it not necessary to expose to the world the intrepidity with which you have ventured to assert in your 4th "Imposition," pages 26 and 30, "that there is *no* Jesuit who has sanctioned the taking life on account of slander." Before you ventured on this statement, my Fathers, you should have satisfied yourselves that I had not the means of seeing these things with my own eyes ; so easy is it to me thus to refute you. For, in addition to the fact that your Fathers Reginaldus, Filiutius, &c. have respectively sanctioned this practice speculatively (as I said before), and that such speculative sanction, on Escobar's principle, assuredly leads to practice ; I now assert, that several of your own writers have allowed the act in question in express terms. Among others is the Père Hereau, in his public lectures ; for which the King caused him to be put in ward in your own house : the doctrine he taught (together with others •equally erroneous), being, that "when a person traduces us in the presence of respectable persons, and continues to do so after being warned to desist, it is lawful for us to *take his* life, not indeed publicly, for fear of scandal, but in *secret*—" *sed clam*."

I have spoken before of Père Launy, and you are aware that his doctrine on this subject was, in 1649, censured by the University of Louvain. And yet it is not *six months* since, that your Father Des Bois maintained at Rouen the very doctrine of Launy, thus stigmatized ; and inculcated the lawfulness of an ecclesiastic defending his reputation, even by *taking the life* of him who attacked it—"etiam cum morte invasoris." Which circumstance occasioned such offence in that place, that all the ministers joined

together to silence him, and to compel him, by ecclesiastical censures, to make a recantation of his doctrine. This circumstance is officially recorded.

What is your answer, I ask, to this, Reverend Fathers? Will you now maintain that "no Jesuit has advanced the opinion that life may be taken for a slander?" And need any thing further be produced for your refutation, than the expressions of your own authors, seeing they forbid not the murder in question *abstractedly*, but solely, on the ground that practically it might cause inconvenience to the public welfare? I ask you here then, Sirs, whether this is not the only question between us, viz. that your doctrine is subversive of the law of God against murder? It is not whether the State may sustain injury, but is religion violated? What avails it in such a dispute as this to plead that society is spared a wrong, when the deadliest wound is inflicted upon piety? I want nothing further to terminate the controversy than this one statement produced by yourselves from Reginaldus, p. 28, t. 3. "The opinion of Reginaldus on the question of killing for the offence of slander is, that an individual may resort to this kind of defence, considered simply in itself." * "An individual," you say, "may resort to this mode of defence,"—that is, slaying another man for a slander—"considering the matter in itself;" consequently, the law of God, which forbids murder, is overthrown by your decision!

It is futile to say, as you afterwards do, "This is unlawful and cruel, even according to God's law, on account

* 'La considerant simplement en elle meme.' (Fr.)

of the numerous murders and irregularities which ensue ; inasmuch as we are bound, before God, to have regard to the welfare of the State." This is to evade the question. Be it remembered, man is under obedience to two great laws ; the one which forbids to take blood, the other which forbids to injure the State. Reginaldus would keep clear of detriment to society, but he doubtless violates the Divine law against murder. This is the only point in dispute. But your other Fathers, who have sanctioned these murders in *actual* practice, have subverted both these rules.

Let us now proceed a step further. We have seen that you, in some cases, forbid injury to the State, and allege that your design in so doing is to conform to the Divine law, which enjoins its support. This may be true, although it is by no means certain ; for you might attain the same end, by the fear alone of the civil power. Let us then examine, upon what principle it is that you herein proceed.

If, Reverend Sirs, you were really influenced by the fear of God, and his law were the first and chief object of your thought, would not this motive uniformly regulate your decisions, and the interests of religion be on all occasions your aim ? But if, on the contrary, we find you unscrupulously violating the most sacred commands imposed by the Deity upon man, when unsupported by the arm of civil authority,—thus submitting the law of God, which proclaims these acts to be criminal in *themselves*, and shrinking only from carrying them into practice from the fear of human law—is it not clear that you have no regard to the Divine will ; and that, if you externally

abstain from injuring society, it is from no motive of piety, but only to subserve your own aims and interests, which have been always the governing principle of bodies of men uninfluenced by conscientious motives?

What, Sirs! regardless of the Divine canon against Homicide, you teach, that blood may be spilt for a slanderous word! And then, while thus setting yourselves against the august command of God, you suppose you can obviate the scandal, and retain your claims to our respect, by alleging that, in practice, you forbid it, from regard to the State, and fear of the law! Is not this only an aggravation of the outrage? Not, indeed, by the regard you show for the civil power—it is not for *that* I censure you; and you yourselves have made this point the subject of your absurd banter at p. 29—I reproach you not for your fear of the Judges, but for your fear of the Judges *only*. This is my indictment, that you make God less the enemy of sin than man! Were you to say, that a slanderer might be murdered by the rules of men, but not by those of God, that would be less intolerable; but to maintain that such an act is too criminal for human endurance, but lawful in the sight of heaven—of Justice itself—of the Supreme and Eternal source of Right—what is this but to proclaim to the whole world, by this unholy perversion, that you can show yourselves fearless towards God, while you are timid towards men?

Then again, wishing to insinuate the permission insensibly, and to circumvent by stratagem the guardians of the public safety, how politicly have you acted, in separating your precepts from each other, and laying down, on the one hand, “the lawfulness, speculatively, of taking

life for slander" (for who can gainsay *mere* speculation?) and on the other hand, "that what is lawful in speculation is also lawful in practice:" for what interest can the State feel in a proposition thus abstract and metaphysical? Thus, these two unsuspected propositions, being separately propounded, the vigilance of the magistrate is lulled; and he forgets to put together the two maxims, and draw from them your own conclusion, that murder is allowable, in revenge for the simple offence of slander!

We have now arrived at one of the most subtle artifices in your policy, that of separating in your writings maxims which in your system are really united. It is in this way that you have established your doctrine of probability, so often referred to. The general principle being stated, you proceed separately to advance things, which—innocent perhaps in themselves—become detestable, when united with a previously enunciated and pernicious principle. I adduce, for example, what you say at page 11 of "your Impositions," and which calls upon me for a reply; "Several celebrated theologians," it is there stated, "are of opinion that life may be taken for the offence of a blow." Here it is clear, that, if a person not holding the doctrine of Probability had asserted this, there would have been nothing to object to, for it is a simple and inconsequential affirmation. But if you, Reverend Sirs, and all who maintain the dangerous doctrine "that whatever is approved by all authors of celebrity is *probable*, and *safe* as regards the conscience," add to this latter proposition, the one above cited, "that several celebrated theologians hold 'life for a blow;'" what is this, I ask, but to place the poignard in every Christian's hand, to

revenge his affronts with death, by announcing that his conscience may be at rest, seeing he is following the opinion of grave and learned authorities ?

Is not this, I ask, horrible ? To report in this way the damnable opinions of your authors, and virtually your own decision in their favour, and thus to give licence to the conscience to act upon those opinions ! But this, Reverend Fathers, is the policy of your school, and one can only be astonished at your hardihood in avowing so undisguisedly your sentiments, by which you stand convicted, on your own admission, of holding that a man may with safe conscience "murder another for the offence of a blow ;" inasmuch as you declare the maxim to be advanced by various eminent authorities."

It is in vain for you to deny this, or to put forward passages from Vasquez and Suarez, condemnatory of these murders which your Brethren sanction. Testimony of this kind, dissociated from other parts, may confuse those who do not understand your system. But I say, let your principles and maxims be put properly together. You may allege, in one place, that Vasquez disallows such homicide. But what is your language elsewhere ? "The probability of one opinion does *not* prevent the probability of an opposite one:" and, in another place: "It is lawful to follow a *less* probable and safe opinion, in preference to one more probable and more safe." What follows from all this, I demand, but that, with entire liberty of conscience, a man may choose from the most contradictory opinions just that one which falls in the most entirely with his own inclination ? What, then, my Fathers, is the value of all your quotations ? I condemn you by the

very means you employ for your defence. Why produce passages which I did not quote, to excuse others which I did quote, and which have nothing in common with each other? Does this give you a right to call me an impostor? Did I affirm that *all* your Fathers taught doctrines equally licentious? Have I not proved, on the contrary, that your chief strength lay in having at your command opinions of every hue for your various occasions? To the advocates of murder you present Lessius; to the humane and scrupulous, Vasquez; so that all may be satisfied, and none be without a grave authority to support their view. Lessius, speaking like a Pagan of homicide, and, perhaps, like a Christian of alms-giving; Vasquez, heathenishly of alms, and Christianly of homicide. Then, by means of the doctrine of probability, held by both, they can make over to each other their respective sentiments; and will feel themselves bound to absolve such as may have carried out into action the opinions which each in his turn has condemned. It is this shifting and versatility which enhance your delinquency: uniformity would be comparatively innocent. Nothing, moreover, is more opposed to the express directions of St. Ignatius and your earlier rulers, than this confusion and intermixture of all opinions. I may have something to say to you on this subject, my reverend Fathers, hereafter; and the world will perhaps be surprised to learn how you have degenerated from the early spirit of your institution; while your own founders foresaw that a relaxation of your moral doctrines, such as this, would be fatal, not to your Society only, but also to the universal Church!

I must tell you, however, in the mean time, that you vainly seek to derive advantage from the opinion of Vasquez. It would be strange, indeed, if, among the writings of so many of your brethren, one or two could not have been found holding opinions such as all Christians acknowledge. Little cause of boasting is it in any one, to maintain that, according to Christ's gospel, murder may not be committed for a blow; but most flagrant is the disgrace of those who deny the proposition. Far from affording you any justification, this fact only aggravates your guilt; for it proves that, possessing among your members some who hold the truth, you adhere not to that truth, but love darkness rather than light. You have been told by an eminent authority of your own, "that it is heathenish—not christian—to maintain that a wound may be returned for a mere blow; that such a doctrine is opposed both to the Decalogue and the Gospel; and would be supported only by the most unprincipled of human society." And in spite of this, and in contradiction of such obvious truths, you are passive, while Lessius, Escobar, and others, aver, in the face of the most solemn denunciations of Jehovah against man-slaying,—that life may be taken in revenge for a blow! What does it avail you then to oppose Vasquez to Lessius, but to show that, according to Vasquez, Lessius is a heathen and a profligate, which is far more than I have ventured to say? What conclusion are we to draw, but that Lessius would overthrow both the Decalogue and the Gospel? What, but that, at the last great day, Vasquez will condemn Lessius on one point, as Lessius will condemn Vasquez on another; and that the whole of your authorities will rise

in judgment, the one against the other, for their awful violations of the law of Christ ?

To conclude, then, Reverend Fathers ; since your doctrine of probability renders the opinions of some of your Members useless to the Church, and advantageous only for the advancement of your own polity, these very opinions do but prove, by their contrariety, the duplicity of your principles. It is in this way that you oppose the solemn dictates of Scripture, corrupt the simplicity of Divine truth, and point to man two diverging ways of holiness and salvation !

LETTER XIV.

REFUTATION FROM SCRIPTURE, THE HOLY FATHERS,
&c., OF THE JESUIT MAXIMS UPON HOMICIDE. PASS-
ING REPLY TO VARIOUS OTHER SLANDERS, AND COM-
PARISON OF THEIR DOCTRINE WITH THE FORMALI-
TIES OBSERVED IN CRIMINAL PROCESSES.

REVEREND FATHERS,

October 23, 1656.

IF my task were nothing more than to reply to your threefold misrepresentations respecting homicide, I should not need to employ many words, and my refutation would lie in the narrowest compass ; but, considering it much more important to impress upon the world a due horror of your opinions on this subject, than to justify the fidelity of my quotations, I deem it necessary to occupy the larger part of this letter in a general refutation of your tenets ; and in proving how opposed they are at once to the sentiments of the Church, and to the dictates of nature.

The sanction to take life, conceded by you on so many occasions, proves how, in this respect, you have utterly disregarded the law of God, and sought to extinguish, in man, the light of nature ; so that it is become necessary to bring you back to the very elementary principles of religion and common sense. What can be more in ac-

cordance with natural feelings than the sentiment, "That one man has no right to deprive another of life." "Our own consciences may tell us," says St. Chrysostom, "that when God issued the command, 'Thou shalt not kill,' he deemed it not necessary to assign the reason why homicide is a sin; because the law supposes such a principle of nature to be already known to us."

This is a command, then, that has been imposed upon man from the commencement of time, and in every age. The Gospel confirmed the sanction of the law; and the decalogue only renewed the prohibition, which man had received from the mouth of Deity (before the introduction of the law) through the instrumentality of our progenitor Noah. At that second birth of the world, God said to the patriarch, "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man: Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man."

This universal interdict takes from man all right over the life of his fellow-man. And so absolutely has God reserved this power to himself, that, by the principles of Christianity—principles at variance, herein, with the false opinions of Paganism—man has not even a right to dispose of his *own* life. But, as it seemed good to the Divine Providence to give to man the institutions of Society, and to appoint punishments for those who trouble its well-being, he has himself enacted laws for taking away the life of offenders; and thus, homicides, which, without such sanction would be unjustifiable infringements upon the rights of our fellows, become, under that sanction, lawful and necessary. This is admirably un-

folded by St. Augustine, Book I. of his "City of God," Ch. 21. "God," he says, "has himself decreed some exception to his general prohibition to kill, whether by the institution of laws for the punishment of criminals, or by special commands, occasionally given, for the death of individuals. When life is taken away in such cases as these, it is not man that kills, but God, of whom man is the mere instrument; as is a sword in the hand of him who uses it in warfare. But, with these exceptions, whoever takes away the life of man is a murderer."

It is then not to be doubted that God alone has the right to take away man's life. Nevertheless, having instituted laws for the capital punishment of offences, he has constituted earthly sovereigns or governments, the depositaries of this power. This is taught us by St. Paul, where, speaking of the right possessed by kings to take life, he clothes it with a Divine authority, saying, "He beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Rom. xiii. 4.)

But this authority being committed to man by God, he requires that it shall be exercised by man, as it is by Himself, with justice, according to St. Paul again in the same connexion. "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good. He is the minister of God to thee for good." And this restriction, so far from weakening, elevates their authority; for it assimilates it to that of the Almighty himself; who is incapable of evil, but omnipotent for good; in contrast with that of demons, who are incapable of good, and have power

only for evil. There is this difference, alone, between Jehovah and earthly potentates, that He, being himself perfect justice and wisdom, may at any instant take the life of his creatures, whensoever and in what manner it shall please him ; for, besides that He is the absolute Disposer of man's life, it is not to be doubted that He never resumes that life without good cause, and in the exercise of perfect discretion, inasmuch as He is incapable alike of injustice and of error. But princes may not thus act ; because, although ministers of God, they possess a human and not a divine nature. They are obnoxious to be misled by error, excited by false suspicion, carried away by passion ; and this has led them, of their own accord, to resort to fitting institutions, and to delegate the power thus committed to them of God, into the hand of wise and impartial magistrates, that it may be improved to the august purposes for which it has been bestowed.

Know then, Reverend Father, that to escape the guilt of homicide in taking man's life, the *authority* of God should be wielded in conjunction with the *justice* of God ; and that if these two conditions be not fulfilled, sin is committed ; be it under Divine authority, but without justice ; or, with justice, but without Divine authority. " From the necessity of such a union, it follows," says St. Augustine, " that any one who, without authority, puts a criminal to death, is himself guilty of crime ; for, this reason, chiefly, that he usurps an authority which God has not conferred." On the other hand, the judge although clothed with that authority, is guilty of homicide, if he puts an innocent person to death, in violation of the laws which it is his duty to follow.

These, Sirs, are the great principles upon which rest the peace and security of society ; principles which have prevailed in all ages, and among all nations ; and on which legislators, both sacred and profane, have founded their laws. For Pagans, even, have not violated these rules, excepting on occasions when the loss of chastity or life could not be averted without it ; “ for then,” remarks Cicero, “ the laws themselves seem to furnish arms to those exposed to such an exigency.”

But that, apart from such occasions as these, individuals should ever be allowed to deprive their fellow-men of life, in revenge for an affront, or to escape an injury to reputation or property, and that, where life is exposed to no danger ; this, I assert, is what heathens themselves never sanctioned. They have, on the contrary, expressly forbidden it ; for the Roman law of the twelve tables enacted, “ That it is unlawful to slay a robber, in the day-time, who is not armed for his own defence.” This too was forbidden in Exodus Ch. xxii. And the law, “ *Furem, ad legem Corneliam,*” taken from Ulpian, “ forbids even the killing of robbers by night, if they do not put our own life in peril.” See Cujas, in tit. dig. de Just. et Jure. ad Leg. 3.

I ask you now, Reverend Fathers, by what authority it is, that your Society permits that which laws, both human and divine, have forbidden ; and how Lessius has dared to say, B. 2, C. 9, N. 66 and 72 : “ In Exodus it is forbidden to kill those committing robbery by day, not defending themselves by arms ; and he that killed another in such manner was to be punished. Yet, *notwithstanding* this, in doing so we should not, in conscience, be culpable, seeing that we cannot otherwise have any certainty

of recovering the property thus stolen from us ; but such recovery must be doubtful ; and we are not bound to expose ourselves to the loss of property, to save the life of a robber. And this even is lawful for *ecclesiastics* also."

Inconceivable audacity ! The law of Moses punishes the taking the life of a robber, if our own life be not threatened ; and you say, the law of the Gospel absolves it ! What, Sirs, did Christ come to destroy the law, or to fulfil it ? "The law might punish," says Lessius, "for such an offence ; but *conscience* shall acquit us." Is the morality of the Gospel more cruel—less hostile to bloodshedding—than that of heathenism, from whence our own legislators have derived the very laws which condemn it ? Shall Christians set more value upon their sordid goods, and less upon the life of immortal man, than idolators and infidels ? What is it, Reverend Fathers, that you ground your rules upon ? Not surely upon any actual law of God, or of man ; but upon reasoning such as this : "The law allows us to defend ourselves against robbery ; and to repel force by force. Now, defence being allowed, homicide must also be allowable, since without it, such defence would often be impossible."

Here, Sirs, I am at issue with you. Defence being allowed, it follows not that homicide is also allowable. It is this barbarity in the manner of defence that is the source of your perversions, and is denominated by the faculty of Louvain "a murderous defence"—*defensio occisiva*—in their Censure of your Père Launy's doctrines upon Homicide. I maintain, then, that there is so much difference in law, between the taking of life and allowable self-defence, that on those very occasions in which the

latter is permitted, homicide is equally forbidden, where life is not put in danger. Hear what Cujas says on this subject, "It is lawful to repel one who endeavours to deprive us of our property; but it is not lawful to deprive him of life." And again, "If we receive a blow, but not with a design against our life, it is lawful to defend ourselves, but not, in doing so to take life."

Where then do you receive authority to say, as do Molina, Reginaldus, Filiutius, Escobar, Lessius, and others. "It is lawful to take life in revenge for a blow?" And again, "It is allowed, by the opinion of all Casuists, 'ex sententia omnium,' to take the life of him who assails our reputation,"* as says Lessius, N. 74. By what title do you—mere unauthorized individuals yourselves—give this power over life to individual persons, and even to the pious? How is it that you presume to usurp this right over life and death—the sole prerogative of the Most High, and the brightest jewel in the crown of Infinitude? To this I demand a reply; and you affect to give one by saying simply in your "thirteenth Imposture," "that the consideration in value for which Molina allows the killing a robber, who escapes without threatening violence, is not so *small* as I state, and must exceed six ducats." Miserable sophistry! Where, Sirs, will you fix this amount? At fifteen—at sixteen ducats? Does this improve your case? Why you do not then get beyond the price of a horse; for Lessius plainly declares, B. 2, C. 9, N. 74, "that we may kill a man who steals our horse." But I tell you again, as I have stated already, that, according to

* 'Tuer celui qui veut nous faire un affront.' (Fr.)

Molina, the amount is fixed at *six ducats*; and if we cannot here agree, let us call in an arbitrator, and one whom you cannot gainsay. I name for the purpose your own Reginaldus, who commenting on this passage of Molina, B. 21, N. 68, says, "Molina here *decides* that the amount for which it is *not* permitted to take life is three, or four, or five ducats." Thus, my Fathers, I have not only Molina, but Reginaldus also to support my assertion.

It will be not less easy for me to refute your fourteenth "Imposture," respecting Molina's alleged permission "to kill a thief for the robbery of a dollar." This is so uniform a doctrine, that Escobar will furnish you with it. In tr. 1, ex. 7, N. 44, he says, "Molina authoritatively fixes the amount for which life may be taken, at a dollar." But you charge me, in the same connexion, with suppressing the subsequent part of the passage: "We ought herein, however, to be careful to observe the moderation of a just defence." * Why do you not then censure Escobar, who has equally omitted these words? This is somewhat sharp policy. Do you think others do not understand as well as you, your own fashion of defence? Do not we know what it is to make "a murderous defence?" (*défense meurtrière*.) You would have it understood that Molina meant by this, that when life is exposed to danger in the preservation of our dollar, that we may kill the assailant, as it is then an act of self-preservation. Were that true, my Fathers, why has Molina said in the same passage, that "in this he differs from Carrerus and Bald," who allow of homicide for preservation of life?

* 'L'on doit garder en cela la modération d'une juste défense.' (Fr.)

I maintain that what he means is simply, that if we can save our crown-piece without killing the robber, we ought not to kill him; but if we cannot save it without killing, even if there be no danger of our own life (as when the robber is unarmed), it is then lawful for us to kill the thief, to save our crown; and that in doing so, according to his opinion, we are not exceeding the limits of lawful defence. For proof of this, hear his own explanation: t. 4, tr. 3, d. 11, N. 5, "We do not exceed the moderation of a just defence, when we use arms against those who have none, or avail ourselves of any other advantage over them." I know there are those who hold a different opinion, but I do not agree with them."

Thus, Reverend Fathers, it is placed beyond controversy, that your authorities allow life to be taken for the defence of property, and reputation, even when the party assailed is in no danger of his own life. And it is on the same principle that sanction is given to the practice of duelling, as I have proved by numerous passages from their writings, to which you have ventured no reply. You comment only on one quotation made by me from your Père Layman, in which he permits such an act, saying, "when, otherwise, we should be in danger of loss of fortune, or honour;" and you charge me with suppressing his concluding words "this, however, may rarely happen." Now this is really to be admired, my good Fathers! This is your happy way of charging me with misrepresentation! We are enquiring whether duelling be lawful or not. There are here two distinct questions at issue. Layman, as a Casuist, sets himself to decide, "is duelling lawful?" and decides affirmatively. We can judge for our-

selves whether the case supposed for its justification be infrequent ; and we contend that it is of common occurrence. But if you prefer the testimony of your good colleague, Diana, he will inform you how common it is, in part 5, tract 14, Misc. 2, Resol. 99. Be it however common or not, and be it that Layman herein follows Navarre, as you so strongly insist,—is it the less atrocious that he should adopt such an opinion, as that (from a false notion of honour) it should be lawful to engage in a duel, contrary to the laws of all Christian States, and to the canons of the Church ; contrary to the authority of Scripture, and to the writings of the Fathers, and to the example of the saints ; and in accordance only with such diabolical and impious reasonings as these : “ that honour is dearer to us than life ; that it is lawful to take life in defence of life ; therefore it is lawful to take life in defence of honour ” ?

What, Sirs ! Because the wickedness of men leads them to cherish this vanity of reputation more than the existence which their Creator has given them, that it may be devoted to His service, therefore the lives of their fellows are to be sacrificed to its preservation ! It is not enough that, by a fatal perversion, this bubble of fame is thus to be valued more than life ; but the vicious attachment—capable, when pursued as an end, of sullyng the holiest actions—is to be allowed to justify the very worst, when resolved, as its motive, into mere jealousy of honour !

And where is this fearful infatuation to end ? To what excesses must it not lead ! Is it not obvious that life will come to be set in the balance with the veriest trifles, if it

be regarded as a point of honour to preserve them ; yes, the life of man may be taken for an *apple* ! Here you would again charge me, my Reverend Fathers, with drawing slanderous inferences from your doctrines, were I not, in saying this, supported by the authority of the grave Lessius himself, who has these words, N. 68 : “ It is not allowable to take the life of another for the preservation of a thing of small value, such as a dollar, or an *apple*—‘ *aut pro pomo* ’—unless the loss of it should be attended with disgrace to ourselves. For then we are bound to recover it, and even to take life, if necessary, for the purpose—‘ *et si opus est occidere* ’—because this is not so much for the preservation of our property as of our honour.” Is not this plain speaking ? And, to conclude with a proposition which includes all the others, hear the following passage from Père Hereau, and which he has adopted from Lessius. “ The right of defending ourselves extends to the use of every kind of means for preserving ourselves from every kind of injury.”

Look at the consequences involved in this inhuman maxim ! Surely every one should oppose it, and especially all persons occupying public stations. And not only should they do this on public grounds, but for their individual safety ; for your Casuists, whom I have quoted in former letters, extend their sanction to the invasion of *their* lives also. Thus, turbulent spirits, who are justly exposed to punishment for their offences, easily persuading themselves that they are objects of oppression, will soon act upon the conviction “ that the right to defend themselves extends to every kind of means, against every kind of injury.” They will no longer feel it necessary to

resist those conscientious scruples, which stifle the greater number of crimes in their birth ; and their only care will be to overcome the external obstacles to their revengeful purposes.

I will however say no more, Reverend Fathers, on this hateful subject, nor on other descriptions of murder yet more atrocious—more imminent to public safety—to which your sanctions have been given, although they are openly treated of by Lessius in his “Doubts 4 and 6,” as well as by others among your writers. Would that these infamous maxims had never been dragged from the dark abyss in which they were engendered ; and that the Devil, their author, had not succeeded in finding agents so devoted to his interests, as to set them forth in all their deformity among Christian nations !

It must be manifest from all that has been advanced, how opposed is the laxity of your opinions to the strictness of the civil law, even amongst heathen states. What must it be then, when compared with the ecclesiastical code, which is so much the more elevated over every other, inasmuch as it is the Church alone that has discovered and possesses true holiness ! Therefore it is that this chaste Bride of Christ, who, in imitation of her Divine Spouse, is willing to shed her blood for the good of others, but never sheds that of others for her own pleasure, entertains an especial horror of the crime of murder—a horror proportioned to the clearness of that light which has been imparted to her by God himself. She regards man as the image of Him whom she adores. She entertains for every individual of our race a holy reverence, as for one bought with an infinite price, and designed to

become a temple of the living God. Thus she judges the death of man—unauthorized by a law from heaven—to be not homicide alone, but an act of sacrilege, by which she is deprived of one of her members; since, whether one of the faithful or not, she regards him either as actually one of her children, or as one capable of becoming such.

These, my Fathers, are the hallowed reasons which, seeing that the Deity has condescended to become *Man* for the salvation of *men*, have so enhanced the value of man's life in the eyes of the Church, that she resents the shedding of his blood as the highest crime that can be committed against God. I will adduce some instances of this; not with the view that such severities should on all occasions be imitated (for I know that the Church may vary the degrees of her external discipline,) but to show what has been ever the immutable spirit of her laws on this subject. The penalties she inflicts for this crime of homicide may vary in different periods; but the horror she evinces for the offence will be unalterably the same.

The Church, during a long period of time, never dispensed with the death of those who were guilty of deliberate homicide, of the same nature as those which your Society sanctions. The celebrated council of Ancyra ordained penance for the crime during the *whole period of life*: and the Church, since then, has deemed it a sufficient relaxation to reduce the term of penance to a large number of years. But to deter men more effectually from the commission of *wilful* homicide, she has even imposed severe punishments upon those which occurred

through inadvertencies ;* as may be seen in St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and in the decrees of Popes Zacchary and Alexander II. The canons quoted by Isaac, Bishop of Langres, t. 2, ch. 13, " direct seven years of penance for killing another in self-defence." And we find St. Hildebert, Bishop of Mans, replying to Yves de Chartres, " That he deemed it right to supersede a priest from his office during his *whole* life, for having killed a thief with a blow of a stone in an act of defence."

Presume then no longer to assert that your decisions are conformable in spirit to the canons of the Church. I defy you to produce one which authorizes the taking life for the preservation of property only, (for I refer not to occasions in which it may be necessary to defend life also,) ' se suaque liberando.' Your own Fathers acknowledge there are none ; among others Launy, tr. 5, disp. 36, Num. 136: " There is," he says, " no law, divine or human, that expressly allows to kill a thief, who uses no violence." Nevertheless, this is what you solemnly authorize. I defy you to show one ecclesiastical law, which allows to take life for defending reputation, for a blow, an injury, or a slander. I defy you to show one which allows the killing a witness, a magistrate, a judge, whatever alleged injury may be sustained from them. The spirit of the Church is entirely opposed to these pernicious maxims, which open a door to the most flagrant irregularities. Her lessons have ever been, " not to render evil for evil ;" " to give place to wrath ;" " to submit to violence ;" " to render to all their dues—honour, sub-

* ' Par imprudence.' (Fr.)

mission, tribute ;" " to pay obedience to magistrates and superiors," even the unjust, because we are to recognize in them the authority of God by whom they are appointed. The Church forbids us (even yet more strictly than the civil law) to avenge ourselves ; and it is by the spirit imbibed from her, that Christian sovereigns, not yielding to vindictive emotions, even in cases of the highest state-treasons, hand over the criminal to the civil judge to be dealt with according to the national laws. Ought not the blush of shame to overspread your cheeks, O Fathers, at the contrast between this mode of procedure and your principles ?

Follow now, I pray, the comparison between the mode of dealing with an enemy, which is authorized by your Society, and the solemn process with which the punishment of death is inflicted upon criminals by our national judicatures.

Every one knows that individuals are never allowed to demand the death of others ; and, if we have been ruined in our circumstances, maimed in our limbs, our house burnt down, our nearest relative even destroyed—if threatened with assassination, or slandered and traduced—we are not left to deal with the offenders ourselves : public prosecutors are appointed, for the purpose of redress on the part of the sovereign, or rather on the part of God. Do you think, Reverend Sirs, that Christian judges have made such regulations as these a mere feint and pretence ? Is it not done, rather, in order that human laws may be assimilated to the Gospel rules, and to prevent the external practice of our jurisprudence being placed in opposition to the convictions and practices of Christianity ?

We may see from this how you stand confuted on the very first principles of justice. You shall be yet more confounded by what follows.

Let us now suppose that the public functionary referred to has demanded the capital punishment of the criminal ; what follows thereupon ? Is death hastily awarded ? No, my Fathers ; man's life is of too much* importance for this ; his Maker's gift is treated with more reverence. The law places it not at the disposal of our fellow-men indiscriminately : it is committed into the hand of magistrates, of learning, intelligence and probity. Nor is the judgment of one alone deemed sufficient for his condemnation. Seven* must solemnly concur in the act. Of those seven, care is taken that no one shall have experienced wrong or injury from the criminal, lest any personal prejudice should produce a bias or feeling of resentment against him. And you are aware also, that in order to secure the clearest exercise of the mind on the part of these Judges, the *earlier* hours of the day only are appropriated to this important duty ; such is the solicitude to obtain due preparation for so solemn an act, wherein they are constituted the representatives and ministers of God ; and to ensure that they shall punish none but those whom the Deity himself condemns.

And therefore it is, in order that they may be faithful dispensers of this divinely-entrusted authority over man's life, that they are allowed only to proceed upon authentic testimony, and according to all other established formalities ; and, finally, can condemn and sentence capitally

* It is obvious that it is the French criminal system that is here referred to. (Transl.)

only in strict conformity with legal rules. And, after all this, if the authority thus divinely derived, compels the abandonment to punishment of the body of the unhappy criminal, the same command of God enjoins a solicitude for their wretched souls. The very criminality of the offenders enhances the obligation to this duty ; lest they should be dismissed from life without an effort for their spiritual preparation. Can any thing be more pure and blameless than this ? Yet so greatly does the Church abhor the shedding of blood,—such is her serious view also respecting homicide—that she holds to be incapacitated from ministering at her altars, any who have taken part in a capital proceeding, although it has been accompanied and sanctioned by all these scrupulous observances !

See then, I pray you, in what manner, by the rules of jurisprudence, man's life is dealt with : see, on the other hand, how your Order deals with it. By your novel code there is but one Judge, and that Judge is the party against whom the offence has been committed. Behold him, at once, Plaintiff, Judge, and Executioner ! At once, he impeaches his enemy, passes his condemnation, and executes the sentence ; and, regardless of the welfare either of body or soul of his fellow-man, he hurls from life, and dooms perhaps to eternal perdition, one, for whom Christ died ! And all this to revenge a blow, a slander, an irritating word, or some similar offence ; for which a magistrate, clothed with lawful authority, might have been himself deemed criminal in capitally committing the offender, seeing the law had awarded no such punishment for the trespass ! And then, to crown and consummate the outrage, no blame, no irregularity, even is to be

imputed, for such an unauthorized—such illegal taking of man's life—even if the party be an ecclesiastic or a priest !

What, Sirs, are we come to ! Are they ecclesiastics, are they priests, who hold this language ? Are they Christians ? Are they Infidels ? Are they *Men* ? Are they *Demons* ? Are these the “ Mysteries revealed by the Lamb to his followers,” or are they abominations whispered by Satan in the ear of those who are led in chains by his delusions ?

For, after all, Reverend Fathers, in what light would you have the world regard you ? Are you to be deemed followers of the gospel, or its opponents ? We must be of one side or another : there is no middle place. “ He that is not with the Saviour is against him.” These two classifications divide the whole race of man. There are, according to St. Augustine, “ two classes, and two different worlds, diffused over the earth's surface ; the world of God's children, which forms that body of which Christ is the Head and Sovereign ; and the world of God's enemies, whose head and ruler is the Devil.” It is on this account that Jesus is called the King and God of the world ; because he has everywhere subjects and worshippers ; and the Devil is also called in Scripture, the Prince and God of the world ; seeing he has everywhere his devotees and slaves. Christ has given to the Church—his seat of empire—such laws as seemed good to *his* infinite wisdom ; and Satan has also exacted, in his kingdom, laws according to *his* pleasure. Jesus has conferred honour upon the sufferer : the Devil upon him who suffers not. Jesus has enjoined upon him who is smitten on the one cheek, to turn the other also : Satan tells the man

who receives a blow, to retaliate even to death upon him that inflicts it. Jesus declares those happy who share with him shame and reproach: Satan proclaims the reproached and slandered to be unhappy. Christ says, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you!" The Devil says, Woe unto those whom the world esteems and caresses not!

Look well, then, to it, my Fathers, to which of these kingdoms you belong. You know the language of the City of Peace—the mystical Jerusalem; and you know also the language of the City of Sorrow, which the Scripture calls "the spiritual Sodom." Which of these languages are you versed in? Which of these do you speak? Those who belong to Christ (according to St. Paul) hold the doctrines of Christ; and those who (in the language of Christ) are children of Satan—" *ex Patre Diabolo*," who was a murderer from the beginning—follow the maxims of the Devil. See what is the language of your school, and ask your writers the question, "If I receive a blow, shall I patiently endure it, rather than aim at the life of him who gives it? Or, am I allowed to kill such an one in revenge of the affront?" "*You are allowed*," say Lessius, Molina, Escobar, Reginaldus, Filiutius, Baldellus, and other Jesuits; "*you are allowed to kill a man from whom you receive a blow*." Answer me, now, is this the language of Jesus Christ? Again: "Would a person be dishonoured by receiving a blow, without taking the life of the person inflicting it?" "Is it to be doubted," says Escobar, "that if a person allows another to *live*, who has given him a blow, he himself will live without honour?"

Yes, Sirs, but it is that honour which the Devil, the fountain of pride, has transmitted to all the children of pride! This is the honour which has ever been the idol of the men of the world. To maintain this honour—the choicest gift of Satan—we see them sacrifice life, in the fury of the duel; true reputation, by the disgraces they entail upon themselves; and their eternal welfare, by the damnation into which they plunge—recklessly foregoing even the rites of Christian sepulture, which ecclesiastical law denies them! But we have cause to bless God for having enlightened the mind of our sovereign* with purer views than those inspired by your theology. His severe ordonnances on the subject have not indeed had the effect of constituting duelling a crime, but they have inflicted a punishment upon the crime inseparable from duelling. He has deterred, by the fear of legal rigours, those, who could not be restrained from the practice by the fear of God; and his sense of piety has taught him that a Christian's honour consists in observance of the laws of God and of religion; and not that vain and empty phantom of honour, which you pretend to be a legitimate excuse for the murder of a fellow-creature! Thus it is that your blood-thirsty decisions have become the abhorrence of the whole world; and you would do well to change your system from a motive of policy, even if not of religious duty. Let me advise you, my Fathers, by a voluntary condemnation of these inhuman opinions, to obviate the fatal consequences which must ensue from them; and for which you alone are responsible. And, to inspire a more

* Louis XIV.

just horror of the crime of homicide, bear ever in mind, I pray you, that the first crime of fallen man was a homicide, committed upon the innocent; that the greatest of crimes was a homicide committed upon the Head and Representative of all the Just; and that homicide is that crime, of all others, which outrages at once the State, the Church, human nature, and religion!

P. S.—I have just seen the reply of your apologist to my 13th Letter: but if he makes no better than that to the present letter, which solves the greater part of his difficulties, he will deserve no further rejoinder. It is pitiful to see him wandering continually out of his proper topics, to scatter his reproaches and slanders against both the living and the dead. Really it is quite needless for you, in order to give greater credibility to the statements with which you furnish him, to disavow before the public so notorious a fact as Compiègne's blow. It is established by the acknowledgment of the party insulted himself, that he received a blow on the cheek from the hand of a Jesuit; and the only doubt that your friends have been able to raise upon the question is, whether he received it from the *back* or the *palm* of the hand; and therefore, whether a blow from the back of the hand ought to be called a blow or not? I really do not know who is to decide this point; but I certainly am of opinion that it must be called, at least, a "*probable*" blow. This is enough to satisfy my conscience.

LETTER XV.

SUBJECT ; THE JESUITS HAVE WITHDRAWN CALUMNY
FROM THE CATALOGUE OF CRIMES, AND MAKE NO
SCRUPLE OF AVAILING THEMSELVES OF ITS AID TO
CONFUTE THEIR OPPONENTS.

REVEREND FATHERS,

Nov. 25, 1656.

As your misrepresentations seem to multiply from day to day, and you avail yourselves of them to outrage so remorselessly all those pious persons who endeavour to oppose your errors, I feel myself compelled, both from a regard for their welfare, and for the interests of the Church, as well as in fulfilment of a promise which I long since made, to lay open to the public a certain secret method in your proceedings ; by which may be judged—and that by a rule drawn from your own principles—what faith ought to be given to your accusations and your slanders.

I am aware there are some who, not being sufficiently acquainted with your principles, find themselves under difficulty upon this matter ; since they are reduced to the alternative either to give credit to the monstrous crimes which you impute to your opponents, or (which seems to them an impossibility) to hold you to be arrant impostors.

“What!” they say, “were these things not really as represented, would religious persons dare to publish them to the world? Would they so violate all the laws of conscience, and seal their own condemnation, by such calumnies?” This is the way they reason; and thus, the palpable proofs by which your calumnies are overthrown being encountered by their own strong prepossession of your sincerity, their minds remain suspended between the proofs of the actual truth, which they are unable to gain-say, and the tendencies of charity which they are apprehensive of wounding. If, then, seeing the only thing that stands in the way of their rejection of your slanders, is their favourable opinion of yourselves, it can be demonstrated to such persons that the ideas you entertain of the offence of slander are different from those which they suppose you to hold; and that you consider you are legitimately promoting your own advantage in traducing your enemies; it is not to be doubted that the force of truth would at once lead them to discredit your impostures. This is the subject, then, reverend Fathers, which I propose to myself in the present Letter.

I do not mean to confine my remarks to proofs that your writings are filled with calumnies: I have a higher aim than this. It is very possible to say that which is false, while we believe it to be true: but the essence of falsehood includes the *intention* to lie. It shall be my endeavour, then, Reverend Sirs, to show that your intention is falsehood and calumny; and that it is with forethought and purpose, that you impute to your adversaries crimes, of which you know they are innocent; inasmuch as you have brought yourselves to believe it possible to do

this without incurring the danger of falling from a state of grace. And although you are as well acquainted as myself with this doctrine of your school, I do not the more omit, in the most unequivocal terms, to hold it up to your view; my object being to sustain the assertion to your own face, and to deprive you of all possibility of denial. So common, in fact, is this tenet amongst your Society, that it is circulated not only in your writings, but also in your public theses; as (among others) those of Louvain, in the year 1645, in the following terms: "Is it anything more than venial sin to calumniate, and impute false crimes; in order to impeach the credibility of those who speak ill of ourselves?—*Quidni non nisi veniale sit, detrahentis auctoritatem magnam, tibi noxiam, falso crimine elidere?*" And this doctrine is so universal among you, that any one daring to oppose it is regarded by you as presumptuous and ignorant.

This was not long since, the treatment experienced by Père Quiroga, a German Capuchin, on his venturing to controvert these views. Your own Père Dicastillus at once entered the field against him, and expressed himself on the question in these terms; de Inst. B. 2, tr. 2, disp. 12, N. 404: "A certain grave Friar, bare-footed and hooded—(*cucullatus, gymnopoda*)—whom I do not name, has had the audacity to denounce this opinion amongst females and ignorant persons; and to assert that it is injurious and scandalous, contrary to sound morality, opposed to the welfare of the state and of society; and, finally, at variance, not only with the opinion of the highest Catholic authorities, but also with those of all who hold Catholic sentiments. But I have contended,

and do still contend, that calumny, where employed against a calumniator (even though it amount to falsehood) is no mortal sin, nor is an offence against justice or charity. And to prove this, I have furnished him with a multitude of authorities from our Fathers, and their entire Colleges, whom I have consulted; among others, the Reverend Father Jean Gans, confessor to the Emperor, the Reverend Father D. Bastèle, confessor to the Archduke Leopold, Father Henri, late preceptor to the two Princes; all the Professors, public and ordinary, of the university of Vienna (entirely consisting of Jesuits); all the Professors of the university of Gratz (likewise Jesuits); all the Professors of the university of Prague (the Masters being Jesuits); from all of whom I hold confirmation of my opinion, under their own bond and seal. Besides which, I have on my side, Père Pennalosa, a Jesuit, Preacher to the Emperor and King of Spain; Père Pilliceroli, a Jesuit, and many others, who held this to be a ‘probable’ opinion previous to our dispute.”

You see from this, my Fathers, that there are few opinions which your Society have taken such pains to establish as this; for indeed there are few of which you stand so much in need. And it is because you have given so fully your authorization to it, that the Casuists avail themselves of it as an indubitable principle. “It is clearly,” says Caramuel, N. 1151, p. 550, “a ‘probable’ opinion that it is not a mortal offence to disseminate falsehoods against character,* in defence of our own reputation. This has been maintained by above twenty

* ‘A calomnia faussement,’ (Fr.)

learned doctors, by Gaspard Hurtado and Dicastillus, Jesuits, &c. ; so that if this doctrine is not to be regarded as a probable one, scarcely any can be regarded as such throughout the whole system of theology."

Oh most flagrant and corrupted theology ! according to whose tenets, if it could not be established to be allowable, with safety of conscience, to deal out mendacious calumnies in defence of our reputation, scarcely any of its decisions could be established ! Can it be doubted, Sirs, that those who hold abstractedly such a principle, will find no difficulty in carrying it into practice ? Our corrupt propensities so naturally incline us to this offence, that when once the restraint of conscience is removed, it will break out with irresistible force. Do you ask for an example ? Caramuel will furnish you with one : " This maxim," said he, " of the Jesuit Dicastillus respecting slander, having been taught by a German countess to the Empress's daughters, the belief that they would commit no more than a venial offence in uttering slanders, induced them, in a few days, to set afloat so many false and calumnious reports, that the whole court was thrown into commotion. It is easy to imagine the use to which they turned this license ; so that to allay the tumult it was found necessary to call in a worthy Capuchin, of exemplary life, named Père Quiroga (and this it was which caused Père Dicastillus so much chagrin) ; who forthwith expressed his opinion that the maxim in question was highly pernicious, especially among females, and he was most urgent that the Empress should immediately interdict the practice."

No one can be surprised at the ill effects which ensued

from this doctrine ; on the contrary, the wonder would have been had it been otherwise. Our self-love easily persuades us that we are unjustly accused ; and most especially is this the case with you, my Fathers, whose vanity so greatly blinds you, that you give out in all your writings that the Church is wounded when a member of your Society is attacked. It would have been strange, therefore, had you not put such a maxim as this into practice. No longer can it be said of you, as it might have been by those who do not know you, “ How is it possible that these worthy Fathers should calumniate their enemies, when in so doing they would endanger their salvation ? ” On the contrary, it may be said, “ How is it likely that these good Fathers should forego the advantage of falsehood and slander, since they find they can use them without danger to their souls ? ” Let us no longer be surprised to find the Jesuits turn calumniators. Their consciences are safe ; what is there to prevent them ? By their credit with the world they can disseminate their slanders without fear of man’s resentment ; and by the latitude they have given to the conscience, they have brought themselves to believe that they have nothing to fear from the justice of God !

Here then, Reverend Father, is the fruitful source of your numerous and malignant impostures. This it was that prompted such libels on the part of your own Père Brisacier, as to bring down upon him the censure of the late pious Archbishop of Paris. This it was that led the Père D’Anjou to denounce publicly from the pulpit in the church of St. Benedict, Paris, on the 8th March 1655, those persons of rank who received the contributions for

the poor in Picardy and Champagne, to which they had given so liberally themselves; and to affirm, with such malignity of falsehood—as if for the very purpose of quenching the charity of any who had yielded credit to the slander—“that he *knew*, for a certainty, that those persons had misappropriated the money, to employ it in purposes hostile to the Church and the State.” What was the consequence? The curate of the parish, a doctor of the Sorbonne, was obliged the next day, to ascend the pulpit, and publicly contradict the calumny.

It was on the same principle that your Père Crasset, in his preaching at Orleans, uttered such gross calumnies that the Bishop of Orleans was obliged, in his Charge of 9th last September, to denounce him as a public impostor; declaring “that he forbids Brother John Crasset, Priest of the Society of Jesus, to preach in his diocese, and to all his people to attend him, under pain of an act of mortal disobedience; inasmuch as he had learnt that the said Crasset had delivered from the pulpit a discourse filled with falsehood and calumnies, against the ecclesiastics of this city; charging them falsely with maintaining the proposition, “That the keeping the commandments of God is impossible;* that internal grace is irresistible; and that Christ did not die for all men;” with other similar sentiments, condemned by Innocent X. For here, Reverend Sirs, is your ordinary method of misrepresentation, and the first species of reproach that you are wont to cast against those whom you seek to denounce. And although you may know it to be impossible to prove the

* ‘Que les commandements de Dieu sont impossibles.’ (Fr.)

charge, as in the case of your Père Crasset and the Orleans' ecclesiastics, your conscience is at ease; for you believe that this method of calumniating your opponents is so clearly allowable, that you hesitate not to circulate your slanders in the most public and extensive manner.

Another striking instance of this was exhibited in your controversy with M. Puys, curate of St. Nisier, at Lyons; and as this incident is very characteristic of the spirit of your Society, I shall relate the leading circumstances of it. You are aware, Reverend Sirs, that in the year 1649 M. Puys translated into French an excellent work of a certain other Capuchin Father, "respecting the duties which Christians owe to their respective parishes, &c.," treating the subject wholly without invective, and not designating any religious bodies or orders in particular. Your Society, however, chose to apply the matter to *themselves*; and throwing aside all feeling of respect for an aged pastor, a Judge Ecclesiastical in the principal See of France, and a man revered by the whole city, the Père Alby issued a furious publication against him, and your Society offered it for sale *themselves*, in your own church, on the day of the Assumption. In this work he brought various charges against M. Puys, and among others, "that he had been guilty of scandalous intrigues; that he lay under suspicion of impiety and heresy; and that he deserved to be excommunicated and brought to the flames." To this M. Puys published a reply; and the Père Alby then maintained in a second Work, the truth of his original charges.

Now, Reverend Sirs, in this case it is clear, either that your brethren were guilty of calumny; or that they be-

lieved all that they asserted against this worthy Father ; and in the latter alternative, they ought to have been satisfied that he had renounced his errors before they deemed him worthy of their countenance. Mark now, however, what occurred on occasion of the reconciliation, which took place, in presence of a large number of the principal persons of the city, whose names, as enumerated in the authorized report, dated 25th Sep. 1650, are here subjoined.* It was before this large assembly that M. Puys simply declared, “ that what he had written was not directed against the Jesuit Fathers ; but that he had referred generally to those who seduce the faithful from their own parishes ; and without intending any application to the Society ; which, on the contrary, he regarded with esteem and affection.” On the strength of these few words, his apostacy, his scandals, his excommunication, were all at an end ! No retractation is asked for, no absolution ; and the Père Alby addressed him in these very words : “ Sir ; a belief that you intended to attack the Society, to which I have the honour to belong, induced me to take up, my pen in reply ; and I considered that the method I pursued in so doing, *was allowable*. But, as I now understand your intention to have been otherwise, I hasten to declare that there is nothing to prevent my regarding you as a man of an enlightened, learned, and *orthodox* mind ; of *irreproachable* morals ; and, in a word, a moral and *exemplary* pastor of your Church. I

* M. de Ville, Vicar-General of the Cardinal of Lyons ; M. Scarron, Canon and Curate of St. Paul, &c. &c. ; M. Gué, President of the Treasuries of France ; M. Groslier, Prevot des Marchandes ; and numerous other official personages.

make this avowal with pleasure, and I desire that all the gentlemen here present will bear witness of and remember it."

They have indeed remembered it, Sirs; and the reconciliation caused more scandal than the dispute. Who but must admire the Père Alby's discourse? He had nothing to retract, not he, as having heard of a change of morals and doctrine on the part of the good Curé; but, simply, "he *now* knows that he did not intend an attack upon the Society, and therefore finds no obstacle to the regarding him as a sound Catholic!" Did he in fact believe him at all to be a heretic? No such thing. And after bringing the charge against him, though knowing it to be false, he makes no acknowledgment of error; but dares, on the contrary, to say, "he considers the use he made of the accusation was allowable."

Do you mean then, my Fathers, really to tell the world, that your only standard of men's faith and piety is to be the opinion they hold of your Society? Have you no fear of being regarded—and *that* by your own confession—as impostors and calumniators? Is then the same individual—wholly unchanged in himself, but just in so far as you consider him hostile or friendly to your body—to be alternately pious or profligate—blameless, or deserving of excommunication—an exemplary pastor of his flock, as fit only for the flames—in a word, a faithful Catholic or a damnable Heretic? With *you*, then, disfavour to your Society and heresy are synonymous; and when we find in your publications many good Catholics branded as heretics, we should only understand you to mean that they have ventured to censure your brethren!

It is well, my good Fathers, that this point should be understood; for in your sense, no doubt, *I* am regarded as an incurable heretic; and you have often bestowed the epithet upon me. It is because you consider that *my* letters have injured you, that you would seek to cut me off from the Church. Therefore, to remain in her bosom, I have no alternative, but, either to countenance your moral delinquencies—which, without doing violence to every sentiment of piety, I cannot do—or to convince you that, in my animadversions, I am aiming only at your real welfare. And this latter result could alone be hoped for on the supposition that you were brought to see and renounce your obliquities. One way or the other therefore, I fear I am hopelessly involved in heresy of this description; for, my own purer system of faith (permit me to say it) not being likely to convict me of such errors, I can relinquish them only by the violation of my own conscience, or by the reformation of yours. Till then I shall be compelled to remain a reprobate and an impostor; and, after the fidelity with which I have represented your sentiments and quoted your writings, you will go about, proclaiming, everywhere, “He must be an absolute agent of Satan to impute such things to our Society, when he cannot find an atom—a vestige of them in our writings!” Truly, in all this you will be only acting in pursuance of your own maxims, and your usual custom; such is the latitude of falsehood to which you consider yourselves entitled.

Allow me here to furnish you with one more instance in proof of what I am stating; which I select, with the further object of replying to another of your misrepre-

sentation. They are not indeed of sufficient importance to require more than such an incidental refutation.

It is about twelve years since the following maxim of the Père Bauny was made a matter of charge against your Society: viz. "It is lawful to expose ourselves to circumstances which may prove to us the occasion of sin, when it is for the purpose of promoting the spiritual or temporal welfare of ourselves or of our neighbours;"* part 1, tr. 4, q. 14, p. 94. And this example is given; "It is lawful for any one to repair to places of public resort, for the purpose of converting abandoned females from their sins, although he may consider it probable he may fall into sin, from having often before been led into temptation on such occasions." What was the reply of your Père Caussin to this in 1644, in his Apology for the Society of Jesus, p. 128? "Let any one read the very passage referred to in Père Bauny, the identical page, the marginal notes, the context, the whole book through, and not a vestige shall be found of such a sentiment; a sentiment, which could only occur to the mind of a man utterly seared in conscience, and the very emissary of the Devil?" And your Père Pintureau, in the like strain, in his first part, p. 94, says, "A man must be lost to all sense of shame to teach such a doctrine; but he must be worse than a demon to attribute it to Père Bauny. Reader, be assured there is not a trace or syllable resembling it throughout his book." Who could have doubted, that those who held such language as this, had

* 'Il est permis de rechercher directement—*primo et per se*—une occasion prochaine de pécher, pour le bien spirituel ou temporel de nous ou de notre prochain.' (Fr.)

just cause of complaint, and that Père Bauny was an injured man? Have you ever used even against me stronger terms? And how could it be credited that the passage in question *was* to be found, in the very words and place described, after their declaration that "there was not a trace or tittle of it in the book?"

In reality, Reverend Sirs, this is the method by which you impose upon the public a belief of your statements, until they encounter a reply; but in this way also you will come to forfeit all credibility, after such reply shall have been made. For so certainly is it proved that what you then said was untrue, that you now make no difficulty in acknowledging this to *be* a maxim of Père Bauny, and that it is to be found at the very place alleged. But what is more admirable still, instead of being (as twelve years before it was) a detestable sentiment, it is now so innocent a one, that in your "Ninth Imposture," p. 10, you charge me "with ignorance and malice for quarrelling with Père Bauny about an opinion which is not at all *discountenanced* by the Schools!" See the advantage of having to do with those who can play fast and loose—who have an affirmative and a negative for every thing! I have only to bring forward yourselves, to refute yourselves. I need only establish two things; the one, that the maxim is bad; the other, that it is Père Bauny's; and both are proved by your own confession. In 1644, you acknowledged that it was "detestable;" and in 1656, you avow that it is Bauny's. This twofold admission is sufficient for my justification; but, more than this, it reveals effectually to all who are capable of judging, the whole scope and spirit of your policy.

Tell me, I pray you, what is the end that your writings propose? Is it truth? No, Sirs; you are the destroyers of truth! Is it the purity of a holy Faith? Just as little; for you sanction a doctrine which you once branded as "detestable." Can you forget that when you called that maxim "detestable," you denied that it was promulgated by your own author; and on the strength of that denial you rested his innocence? And now that you avow it to be his, you alike maintain the innocence of the maxim and the orthodoxy of its propounder! It then clearly appears, that the exculpation of the Father being the only thing common to your two replies, *that* was the only point you sought to establish; and thus your only object is to defend your own members, alike when you assert that a sentiment *is* in their writings, and that it *is not*; that it is good and that it is *bad*; looking only to your own sordid and fluctuating interests, but regardless of the sacredness of truth, which is unchangeable!

Need I add more in proof of my statements? I could bring forward innumerable examples, but will content myself with one other only; and I have no doubt that you also will find this sufficient.

Your Fraternity has been from time to time reproached with another proposition of your Père Bauny, tr. 4, quest. 22, p. 100; "We ought not to deny or postpone Absolution to those who are living in the commission of crimes, even against the law of God, of nature, and of the Church; and that, though we may entertain no hope of their amendment;" '*etsi emendationis futuræ spes nulla appareat.*' I beg, reverend Fathers, you will now inform me which of your two brethren has, in your opinion,

made the best reply upon this point, Père Pintereau or Père Brisacier ; for they have both taken up the defence of their brother, but in different ways. The one condemns the proposition, but denies that it is Bauny's ; the other avows it to be Bauny's, but justifies the doctrine it contains.

Hear what they respectively say. First, for Père Pintereau, p. 18 ; “ Can any thing equal the shamelessness and impudence of imputing in this positive manner to Père Bauny so *damnable* a doctrine ? Judge, reader, of the shamelessness of this calumny ; see how the Jesuits are traduced, and say whether so black an imputation is not an invention of the very Father of Lies ! ” Now mark what your Père Brisacier says, 4 Part, p. 21. “ It is admitted that Père Bauny says what is reported of him ; (this is pretty completely disposing of his Brother Pintereau.) But,” he adds, “ in justification of the learned Father, observe, you who reprove him for this sentiment ; when a Penitent is at your feet, his guardian Angel hypothecates (as bail for him) all his own pretensions to heaven. If you wait till God the Father shall swear that David, in the Spirit, said *falsely* that ‘ all men are liars, deceivers, frail ; ’ and till the penitent in question shall be no longer deceitful, frail, fickle, or a sinner like other men, you will assuredly apply the blood of Christ to no one.”

What, Sirs, is to be thought of this extravagant and impious language ; that, if we are to wait till we have some hope of a sinner's amendment, before giving him absolution, we must wait till God shall swear that he will never fall again ? What ! is there no difference between

a hope and a certainty? How do we outrage the grace of Christ by declaring that "man's abandonment of his crimes against God, against nature, and against the Church, is hopeless, unless the Word of Inspiration have uttered falsehood!" So that, according to this doctrine, if absolution be withheld from those of whose amendment we have no hope, Christ's blood is valueless, and can never be applied! To what lengths, my Fathers, does your inordinate desire to justify your brotherhood carry you, when you can find but two methods of doing so—imposture, or impiety; and thus the least culpable of the alternatives is, boldly to disavow things that are palpable to the whole world!

This is the reason why you avail yourselves so largely of this resource; but you do not stop here. You scruple not to commit *forgeries*, in order to excite odium against your opponents; witness "The Letter of a Minister to M. Arnould," which you circulated throughout Paris, to cause it to be believed that the work "On frequent Communion," approved by so many Bishops and learned Divines, but which bore somewhat hard upon your opinions, was the result of a secret understanding with the Ministers of Charenton. On another occasion, you attribute to your adversaries writings filled with impiety, such as the "Circular Letter of the Jansenists;" the trashy style of which at once betrays the grossness of the deception, and plainly reveals the impertinence and malice of your own Père Meynier, who dared to avail himself of this artifice to circulate the most flagrant impostures. Sometimes you quote books that never had existence, such as "the Constitutions of the Holy Sacra-

ment," from which you quote fabricated passages, at your own pleasure, which shock simple-minded people, who are not aware of the hardihood with which you are in the habit of inventing and giving currency to falsehood. There is no species of deception to which you do not resort. Never could the maxim by which your Society sanctions this weapon be in better hands than yours !

But these methods are too palpable, and easily seen through : you have others yet more subtle in reserve. In these your custom is to particularize nothing, in order to deprive your antagonist of all means of reprisal and answer. As, for instance, when the Père Brisacier says, " his enemies are in the habit of committing abominable crimes ; but he will not further describe them : " do you not see that there can be no convicting of falsehood a charge so indefinite as this ? An ingenious individual, however, has succeeded in discovering the secret ; and he again, my good Father, is a *Capuchin*. You really are now-a-days somewhat unlucky with Capuchins ; and I am fearful the time may come when you will be equally so with Benedictines. The Capuchin in question is one Père Valerian, of the House of the Counts de Magnis. You will learn from this little narrative in what way he encountered your calumnies.

This person had just succeeded in effecting the conversion of Prince Ernest, Landgrave of Hesse Rheinsfeld : on this your Fathers, as if chagrined at witnessing the conversion of a Sovereign Prince without their intervention, immediately issued a book against him (for everywhere the best persons are subject to your persecutions,)

in which, by falsifying certain passages from his writings, they imputed to him a heretical doctrine. They also circulated a letter, in which they said, "Yes, we *could* reveal things—we say not what they are—which might disturb you not a little! And if you do not give proper explanations, we shall be obliged to report you to the Pope and the Cardinals." Now this is a proceeding sufficiently subtle; and I doubt not, my good Fathers, that you would be disposed to say the same sort of thing of me. But mark the way in which the worthy Capuchin replies to them, in his work printed at Prague last year, at pages 112 and following; "How am I," he asks, "to meet charges thus vague and indefinite? How refute calumnies unsubstantial as the air? Thus it is that I treat them; I publicly and solemnly tell my accusers that, unless they state the fullest particulars of the offences they impute to me before the whole world, they shall be held up as flagrant impostors, as subtle and impudent liars! Come forward, then, slanderers! Publish these things upon the house-tops instead of whispering them in the ear, where you thought you could insinuate your falsehoods with impunity! There are, indeed, those who resent the scandal that these contentions produce; but let it be remembered that the scandal lies at the door of those who thus impute to me such a crime as heresy, and excite against me suspicion of other offences. My only resource therefore is thus openly to maintain my innocence!"

Truly, Reverend Sirs, you come off the worst in the controversy; and no one could have defended himself better than this worthy Capuchin. It is clear that there

existed not the very slightest ground for your insinuation against the good Father; for to this hour you have made no reply to his challenge. You certainly contrive to bring yourselves every now and then into ugly dilemmas; but these difficulties fail in teaching you wisdom. A little time after, you attacked your respondent again in a similar way, on another subject; and he again defended himself in the following terms, page 151; "This body of persons, who are making themselves the aversion of all Christendom, aspire, under pretence of superior virtue, to power and domination, by turning to their own purposes every description of laws, divine, human, positive, and natural. By means of their doctrines, by fears, or by hopes, they enlist on their side the highest human authorities; and then abuse the ascendancy thus acquired, for the promotion of the most detestable intrigues. Their criminal schemes elude unhappily both punishment and check; and through the encouragement they receive, they seem emboldened to perseverance, even as if they were in them rendering service to God himself. The whole world sees and execrates their baseness; but few are capable of making a stand against a tyranny so formidable. This, however, is what I am resolved to do! I have already put them to confusion; and I will do so yet more. I declare, then, that they have been guilty of most impudent falsehood — '*mentiris impudentissimè.*' If the charges they have brought against me be true, let them bring forward their proofs, or stand convicted of the most flagrant slander! It will now be seen which of us has right on his side. I take the world to witness, that these men, so sensitive to injuries which they have the power to

repel, are making a mere show of enduring patiently charges which they are unable to refute; and mask their real impotence under a pretence of virtue. Therefore it is that I have determined in this way to expose their shame; that the dullest may comprehend their silence to be, not the effect of Christian forbearance, but the confusion of a wounded conscience!"

These, Sirs, are his words; and he thus concludes: "These persons, whose history is known to all the world, have become so scandalous in their entire conduct, and so audacious from the impunity they have too long enjoyed, that I should be a traitor to Christ and his Church, did I not thus openly declare my detestation of their proceedings; and this, not less to justify myself, than to warn the simple-minded against their seductions!"

My revered Fathers, there is no way left to evade this. You stand here in the position of convicted calumniators; and you have only to have recourse to your own maxim, that this kind of calumny is no crime. This worthy ecclesiastic has found a method to stop your mouths; and the same method must be adopted at all times, when you bring charges against persons without proof. We shall only have to reply to every one of you, like the Capuchin Father, "*mentiris impudentissimè!*" For who, in fact, could make any other reply? When, for instance, your Père Brisacier writes in a strain like this, of his opponents, "that they are the gates of hell; high-priests of Satan; persons fallen from faith, hope, and charity; builders up of the treasury of Antichrist; and all this I say not in mere invective, but from the conviction of truth;" would any one descend to the puerility of dis-

proving that he is "a gate of hell, or a builder of the treasury of Antichrist?"

In the same way, what answer is to be given to all those vague animadversions in your books, and your futile replies to my letters? such, for example, as "that restitution has been carried so far, as to reduce creditors to poverty; that full purses have been offered to learned ecclesiastics, and refused by them; that benefices have been bestowed for the sole purpose of spreading heretical tenets; that we have pensionaries among the most distinguished ecclesiastics in the sovereign courts; and that I am also a pensionary of Port Royal, and was a writer of romances, before the publication of my Letters"—I, who have never in my life read any, and do not even know the names of those of your apologist? What answer is to be given, my good Fathers, to all those things, but "*mentiris impudentissimè*," when you particularize neither persons, words, time, or place? Either you must be silent, or substantiate all the circumstances, as I did when I gave the histories of Père Alby and Jean d'Alba; otherwise assuredly you will injure no one but yourselves. The fables you deal in might have availed you, before your principles were known; but now that all is laid open, when you venture again to whisper furtively to any one, "some trust-worthy person (whom you are not at liberty to name), has told you very flagrant things of such and such an one;" we shall immediately recollect the "*mentiris impudentissimè*" of the good Capuchin.

Too long have you deceived the world, and abused the belief it has yielded to your impostures! It is time now to vindicate the numberless reputations that you have

destroyed. Yet where can be found innocence so perfect as to suffer no taint from the audacious calumnies of a Society ramified over the whole earth, and whose sanctified garb covers a heart of such malignity, as to commit the basest of crimes, not in violation of, but in strict conformity with its own maxims? Let none therefore censure me for having destroyed the confidence once reposed in you. Far more just is it to preserve to the multitudes whom you have traduced, that reputation for sanctity, which they ought never to have forfeited, than to leave you the credit of a sincerity which you never deserved. And, as the one could not be accomplished without the other, how important was it that you should be held up, as it has been my endeavour to do, in your true colours to the world!

This is the undertaking which I have here commenced; but much time will be required for its completion. It *shall*, however, Reverend Sirs, be completed, nor shall all the resources of your policy avail to prevent it; for the efforts you make to oppose my design will serve only to discover to the least clear-sighted the greatness of your fears; and prove that, while your conscience shrinks from my revelations, you have done all that was in your power, though ineffectually, to prevent and stifle them.

LETTER XVI.

THE JESUITS' SHAMEFUL CALUMNIES AGAINST PIOUS ECCLESIASTICS, AND HOLY WOMEN.

REVEREND FATHERS, . . . *Dec. 4, 1656.*

I PROCEED now with your further aspersions; and shall first dispose of the remaining portion of your "Advertisements." But as all your other publications are filled with statements of the same description, they will also afford me conjointly matter for animadversion.

In one word, then, I take upon myself to tell you, that in that fiction respecting M. D'Ypres, with which you have filled several of your writings, you have maliciously tortured certain ambiguous expressions in one of his Letters,* which, being susceptible of an unobjectionable sense, ought, according to the rules of the Church, to be construed favourably; and could not have been otherwise interpreted, but in that spirit which uniformly actuates your Society. For why should you infer, when he says to his friend, "Do not concern yourself about your nephew; I will furnish him with what he requires,

* The letters of Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, were first printed by the Jesuits, and afterwards the Père Gerberon republished them in the Low Countries with some very curious notes. (French Ed.)

out of the money in my hands,"—that he implied by those expressions, that he should take the money without returning it; and not rather that he should advance it temporarily, to be afterwards repaid? But see now your imprudence; for you have yourselves furnished the refutation of your calumny, in those other Letters of M. D'Ypres, published by yourselves; which plainly show that the transaction in question was nothing more than an advance of money, to be repaid again. This appears, in the Letter of 30th July, 1619, quoted by yourselves, to your entire confusion: "Do not give yourself any concern about *the advances*; he shall want for nothing while he remains here." And in that of the 6th January, 1620, in which he says, "You are too hasty; whenever it shall become necessary to settle accounts, the measure of credit I enjoy here will enable me to raise as much money as will be necessary."

It is you, then, my Fathers, who are the deceivers; and not in this subject only, but also in your ridiculous story of the Poor-Box of St. Merri.* For of what advantage to you could be the charge, which one of your friends raised against this ecclesiastic, whom you had determined to run down? Is a man to be held guilty, because he is accused? No, Sirs; holy men, such as he, will ever be subject to calumny, while there are slanderers in the world like yourselves! It is not upon the charge, but the *verdict*, that we are to form our judgment. Now the sentence that was given, in this case, on the 23rd February, 1656, establishes in favour of the party referred

* Here, as in the preceding paragraph, are references to contemporary occurrences, of which no explanation is given by the French Editors. (Transl.)

to, a full justification; in addition to which, the man who so rashly initiated this unjust procedure, was disavowed by his colleagues, and compelled to retract the charges. And as to what you say in the same place, “of the celebrated Director, who suddenly acquired a property of nine hundred thousand livres,” it is sufficient to refer you to the respected Curates of St. Roche and St. Paul, who will bear testimony before the whole of Paris to his perfect disinterestedness in the affair, as well as to the inexpressible maliciousness of your accusations.

Enough, however, of these trumpery falsehoods. They are the mere rudimental essays of novices, not the mature achievements of your more eminent professors. To these latter I am now, my Fathers, advancing; and I begin with that instance of calumny, the very blackest that the evil spirit of your Society ever concocted—I mean the intolerable audacity with which you have dared to impute to certain holy women and their instructors, “that they disbelieve the mystery of transubstantiation, and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.”* Here, Sirs, is an imposture worthy of yourselves! This is a crime which Heaven alone can fitly punish, as it is one which none but yourselves are capable of committing. It demands also the deep humility with which these lowly sufferers are endued to bear such an accusation with patience; while the heart must be as malignant as that of the infamous slanderers themselves that can yield credence to the calumny! I care not to undertake their defence;—the breath of suspicion has never rested upon

* See note in a following page.

them. Did they need defenders, they would find others, and better qualified for the office than myself. What I am now about to adduce is, not to demonstrate *their* innocence, but *your* malice. All I aim at is, to prove to the whole world that there is no baseness so flagrant as that you should be incapable of its perpetration !

I know, however, you will not fail to meet this with the sneer, "*He* belongs to the Port Royal"—for this is your constant allegation against any who oppose themselves to your enormities. As if it was within the walls of the Port Royal only that zeal could be found sufficient for defending against your perversions, the purity of Christian Faith ! I well know, Reverend Sirs, the excellence of the devout Solitaries who there hold their secluded seats ; and I have not to be informed, how greatly the world is indebted for their profound and instructive writings. I am well acquainted with their unfeigned piety, and their mature learning ; and, although I have *never* belonged to their Society, as you (in your ignorance who I really am) would desire should be believed ; yet am I not without the advantage of a personal acquaintance with several of their members, while I revere the virtues of all. But the God of Truth has not confined to their body alone the power and the will to oppose your corruptions, as, with His help, I hope to make you perceive. And if His grace (from whom I derive all the ability I possess) shall be given, to sustain me throughout this undertaking, I hope to be able yet further, so to follow up our controversy, that you may even regret you have *not* a member of the Port Royal to cope with !

In fulfilment, then, Sirs, of this my endeavour, and not

willing to leave those whom you have outraged by this flagrant slander, no other resource than to pour out in silence, to Heaven, their meek supplications for your pardon, I have undertaken—I, who am personally unconcerned in this injury—to make you blush for your wrong-doing, in the face of the whole Church, and thus experience that salutary confusion described in Holy Writ, as almost the only remedy for enormities such as yours; “*Imple facies eorum ignominia, et quærent nomen tuum, Domine!*” * “

It is time that a check should be imposed upon insolence such as this, which spares not the purest individuals, or the holiest places! Who can be safe, I demand, after calumnies like this? What Sirs! are we to see you, with impunity, publishing, *yourselves*, and circulating throughout the whole of Paris, a work, under the name of your own member Meynier, and bearing this scandalous title, “Port Royal and Geneva agreed in opposing the Holy Sacrament of the Altar;” a work in which you charge with this apostacy not only M. L’Abbé de St. Cyran and M. Arnauld, but also the Mère Agnes, his sister, and all the nuns of her convent; respecting whom you assert, p. 96, “that their opinions concerning the Eucharist are suspected, equally with M. Arnauld’s;” while of the latter you affirm, at p. 4, “that he is virtually Calvinistic!”

* It will be obvious to the Protestant reader to remark, and to regret, that this fine passage, into which the Author has poured the whole vehemence of his impassioned spirit, should be expended (although consistently with his own faith) in defending these injured females from an imputation, which, malignant as was its origin, would have, if well founded, commended them more to our sympathies than the most triumphant establishment of their innocence. (Transl.)

I ask now, in the face of the whole world, if, throughout the universal Church can be found persons, upon whom such a reproach could be cast with less, even of the show of probability, than upon these? Tell me, Sirs—were these nuns, and their instructors, “agreed with Geneva in opposing the Holy Sacrament of the Altar” (the very thought of which is abhorrent to their mind) why should they have adopted as the very principal object of their devotions that sacrament, thus held in abomination? Why incorporate prominently in their rules that sacred institution? Why adopt the habit of the holy sacrament;—call themselves “Daughters of the holy sacrament;”—give their church the very name of the holy sacrament? Why should they have asked and obtained from Rome a confirmation of this institution, and the liberty to celebrate weekly its offices (offices in which the faith of the Church is so perfectly expressed,) if they were conspiring with Geneva against this primary article of the Church’s faith? Why should they have bound themselves by a special act of devotion (also sanctioned by the Pope) to appoint night and day a constant succession of their holy sisterhood before the sacred host, in order to counteract, by their unceasing adoration of that perpetual sacrifice, the impiety of a heresy which aims at its abolition? * Tell me, if you can, why, among all the mysteries of our religion, they should have neglected those which they be-

* It will here again be noticed, that these and many other passages throughout the work are valuable, as showing the warmth and sincerity of Pascal’s devotedness at that time to the doctrinal views of the Church, against whose *moral* and *social* corruptions (as embodied and exaggerated in the Jesuit system) he was dealing the most deadly wounds. (Transl.)

lieve, to cherish one which they discredit; and devoted themselves in a manner so hearty and entire to this dogma of our faith, if, like the heretic, they regarded it as the "Mystery of Iniquity"? What have you to say, Reverend Sirs, to testimony so copious, not of words only but of actions, and not of particular acts alone, but of a whole course of life devoted to the adoration of their Redeemer upon his own altar? What, to the works which you describe as issuing from Port Royal, filled with the most explicit details respecting the essentials of this great mystery; works of which even the Fathers and Councils have availed themselves? Is it not absolutely ludicrous, although most indecent, to hear the terms in which you thus libel M. Arnauld: "M. A." you say, "speaks indeed of Transubstantiation; but it is possible he means a '*transubstantiation significative*.'" He declares his belief in the 'real Presence;' but who is to satisfy us that he does not intend by it a true and 'real figure?'* Is it come to this, my Fathers? Who may not be proved to be Calvinists at your pleasure, if you are to convey a licence to corrupt expressions the most canonical and pure by the malicious subtleties of your newly-invented equivocations? Who has ever used any other terms than these, especially in pious, simple, and uncontroversial discourses? Yet, so imbued are all their writings, with love and reverence of this august mystery, that I defy you, Sirs, with all your artifices, to detect in them the slightest appearance of ambiguity, or the most remote sympathy with the sentiments of Geneva.

* 'Une figure vraie et réelle.' (Fr.)

Every one knows that the heresy of Geneva consists essentially, as you state yourselves, in believing that Jesus Christ is not corporeally present in his sacrament ; that it is impossible for him to be in various places at one time ; that he is, in reality, in heaven alone ; and there—and not at the altar—he should be adored ; that the substance of the bread remains unchanged ; that the body of Christ is not taken into the mouth, or received as our food ; that it is eaten only by faith, and consequently, the wicked do not eat it at all ; and that the mass is not a sacrifice, but an abomination. Hear then, my Fathers, in what way Port Royal is in accordance with Geneva, in their writings. Read there, to your confusion, “ That the flesh and blood are contained in the substances of bread and wine.” (2nd Letter of Arnauld, p. 359.) “ That the Holy of Holies is present in the sanctuary, and should there be adored.” (Ibid. p. 243.) “ That Christ dwells in sinners, communicating, by the real and actual presence of his body in their body, though not by the presence of his Spirit in their heart.” (Freq. Com. 3d Part, Ch. 16.) “ That the mortal remains of the bodies of saints derive their chief dignity from the seed of life which remains to them, from the contact which had been experienced with the immortal and life-giving flesh of Christ.” (1st Part, Ch. 40.) “ That it is not by any natural power, but by the omnipotence of God (to whom nothing is impossible) that the body of Christ dwells in the host, and in the smallest part of each individual host.” (Theol. fam. Lec. 15.) “ That the Divine efficacy is present to produce the effect which the words of consecration signify.” (Ibid.) “ That Jesus who is brought down and laid upon the altar, is at the same

- time elevated in his glory ; that he is, by himself, and by his ordinary powers, in various places at the same time—in the midst of the Church triumphant, and in the Church militant and fugitive.” (De la Suspension, rais. 21.)
- “ That the sacramental elements remain suspended, and subsist in an extraordinary way without dependence upon any thing ; and the body of Christ is also suspended in the elements : that it depends not upon them, in the manner that the substances depend upon adventitious circumstances.” * (Ibid. 23.) “ That the substance of the bread changes, leaving the casualties unchangeable.” (Heures dans la prose du saint Sacrement.) “ That Christ dwells in the Eucharist with the same glory that he possesses in the heavens.” (Lettres de M. St. Cyrar, tom. 1, let. 93.) “ That his glorious humanity resides in the tabernacles of the Church under the substance of bread, which visibly encloses him ; and, knowing our earthliness, he thus leads us to the adoration of his Divinity, present in all places, by that of his humanity, present in each several place.” (Ibid.) “ That we receive the body of Jesus upon our tongue, and he sanctifies it by his Divine touch.” (Lett. 32.) “ He enters the mouth of the priest.” (Lett. 72.) “ That although Jesus Christ makes himself accessible to us, through his love and clemency in the holy sacrament, he does not the less preserve his inaccessibility as an inseparable condition of his Divine nature ; because, although the body and blood alone be there, by virtue of the words—‘ *vi verborum* ’—as the school-men say—that does not prevent his entire Divinity, with his humanity,

* ‘ *Dependent des accidents.* ’ (Fr.)

being there also by a necessary conjunction." (*Défense du Chapelet, &c.*, p. 217.) And, finally, "The Eucharist is both a sacrament and a sacrifice." (*Theol. fam. Leo*. 15.) And, "Although the sacrifice is a commemoration of that of the cross, there is this difference, that that of the mass is offered alone for the Church and for the faithful who are partaking the communion, while that of the cross was offered for the whole world according to holy Scripture." (*Ibid.* p. 153.)

I think, my Fathers, this quotation may suffice to prove that misrepresentation never was more gross than this of yours. But I intend further to bring you forward as witnesses against yourselves. For what is it that you make a condition to obviate all suspicion of agreement with Geneva? "If M. Arnauld," writes your own Père Meynier, p. 83, "had said that in this ineffable mystery there had remained in the elements no substance of bread, but only the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, I should have admitted that he was decidedly opposed to the views of Geneva." Admit it then now, ye impostors, and make him a reparation as public as your calumny! How often have you yourselves read the fact in the passages I have cited? But, besides this, the "*Theologie Familière*" of M. St. Cyran, being sanctioned by M. Arnauld, it is to be held as containing the views of both. Read then the whole of *Lecon 15*, and especially the second article, and you will find the very expression you require, and conveyed even with more precision than by yourselves. "Is there now bread in the wafer, and wine in the cup? No: all the substance of the bread and the wine is displaced by that of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which

latter it thenceforth remains, clothed with the qualities and elements of bread and wine."

Now, Reverend Sir, will you again state that the Port Royal teaches nothing but what Geneva receives; and that M. Arnauld, has, in his Second Letter, said nothing that had not been better expressed by a minister of Charenton? Let us summon Mestrezat, and have him declare, in the same manner like M. Arnauld, Letter, p. 387 and following, "It is an infamous falsehood to charge him with denying transubstantiation; he maintains as a fundamental doctrine in all his writings the real presence of the Son of God, in opposition to the Calvinistic heresy: he is never so happy as when in a place where adoration is constantly paid to the Holy of Holies, as present in the sanctuary." All which is much more opposed to the belief of the Calvinists than even the real presence, since, according to Cardinal Richelieu, in his "Controversies," p. 536, "The new ministers of France having united with the Lutherans, who believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, they have declared that they only separate from the Church, in respect of this mystery, on account of the adoration paid by Catholics to the Eucharist." Cause to be subscribed at Geneva all the passages I have cited to you from the works of Port Royal, and not only passages, but entire treatises upon this mystery, such as the Book on 'frequent Communion,' 'Explanation of the Mass' and many others; and procure the establishment at Charenton of this holy institution, the ceaseless adoration of the Redeemer in the Eucharist, as at Port Royal, and you will then render the most signal service to the Church; for in that case, Port Royal would not be in

accordance with Geneva, but Geneva in accordance with Port Royal, and with the universal Church.

Truly, my Fathers, you could have committed no greater mistake than that of accusing the Port Royal of heterodoxy respecting the Eucharist; but I shall now proceed to show the motives that induced you to take that step. You perceive already that I understand something of your policy. You are consistent in it at all times and on all occasions.

If the Abbé of St. Cyran and M. Arnauld had only stated what ought to be the belief respecting this mystery, and not what ought to be done in *duly preparing* for its participation, they would have been the best Catholics in the world, and no equivocation would have been discovered in their definition of "real presence" and transubstantiation. But as it is your method to brand all who set themselves to oppose your laxities of practice with heresy, and that too just in the very points on which they oppose you, how could it be otherwise than that M. Arnauld should incur your stigma, after publishing a book expressly against the *profanations* of this mystery by your Society? No, Reverend Sirs! trust me, he could not with impunity say "Let not the Body of the Lord Jesus be given to those who are relapsing continually into former offences, and of whom no hope of amendment can be entertained; but let persons be warned from the altar, that they may purify themselves by a sincere repentance, and afterwards partake of it with due efficacy!" Suffer not such language as this, my good Fathers, or you will soon find your Confessionals thinned. Does not your own Père Brisacier say, "If you follow

such a method as this, you will apply the blood of Christ to none?" Far better is it for you to follow the practice of your Society, as given by your Père Mascarenhas, in a work that has received the sanction of your Authorities, and even of your Reverend *Father General*, viz. "that all persons, and even priests, may receive the Body of Jesus Christ on the very day in which they may have fallen into grievous offences; and so far from this being an abuse of the office, it is commendable to avail themselves of it in this way: Confessors are not bound to reject such persons, but ought, on the contrary, to urge such as have committed these crimes to communicate at the very moment; because, notwithstanding the Church may have forbidden this, the prohibition is abolished by universal consent throughout the world."

See now, my Fathers, the beneficial fruit of having Jesuits over all the earth! Here we have a specimen of the universal practice which *you* have introduced, and still maintain. No matter that the Table of Christ be filled with abominations, provided your churches be not empty! Establish, by whatever means—at whatever cost—the heresy of those who oppose them! But how is this to be done, after the irrefragable proofs they have given of their orthodoxy? Have you no fear that I shall bring forward the four grand proofs you have alleged of their heresy? You may well shrink from my examination of them, and I shall not spare exposing your shame. Let us proceed now to the first.

"M. de St. Cyran," says the Père Meynier, "when consoling one of his friends on the death of his mother, t. 1, Lett. 14, says, 'the most acceptable sacrifice that

can be offered, when under Divine chastisements, is patience;’ therefore he is a Calvinist.” Now this, my Fathers, is ingenious, and I doubt if any one but the writer would perceive this meaning. Let us then gather it from himself. “Because,” proceeds this great controversialist, “he does not believe in the sacrifice of the Mass. For that is, of all others, the most acceptable to God.” Who will now say the Jesuits cannot reason? So well can they argue, that they can prove any persons they wish to be heretics—and even the Holy Scripture itself.* For would it not be heresy to say as in Eccles. “there is nothing worse than the love of money; ‘nihil est iniquius quàm amare pecuniam;’ as if adultery, homicide, idolatry, were not greater crimes? And who does not use the same kind of expressions as this continually; for instance, again, “the sacrifice of a contrite and humble spirit is the most acceptable in the sight of God;” for in these sayings we are only comparing certain internal graces, one with another, and not with

* Pascal had doubtless here in view the Père Theophile Raynauld, Savoyard Jesuit, who proposed to pass a censure upon the Apostles’ Creed, by which he undertook to prove that this earliest Confession of Christianity is heretical in all its chief articles. It appeared first in the Latin work of that Jesuit, entitled ‘*Erotemata de bonis ac malis libris*,’ in 4to. Lugduni, 1653; and reprinted since then, as a blasphemous production, in several works. I am well aware that it is a sarcasm of Père Theo. Raynauld, directed against the censures of the Sorbonne. But how could he indulge himself in raillery upon one of the important acts of Christianity? This is the first article of the singular effusion: *Erotemata*, p. 294, in 4to; “*Credo in Deum, patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem cœli et terræ. Primus iste articulus, si intelligatur, quasi solus pater sit Deus, et omnipotens et Creator; Filius autem, et Spiritus Sanctus solum creaturæ sint, Ideoque nec Filius vere ac substantialiter dici possit Deus, et omnipotens et Creator, similiterque Spiritus Sanctus: propositio et blasphema; individuae Trinitatis destructiva, et pridem in sacro et œcumenico Nicæno concilio trecentorum decem et octo episcoporum, &c. &c.*” *Le reste de la piece est sur même ton.* (Note of Edit. in 1812.)

the sacrifice of the Mass, which is of a wholly different nature, and higher order? Do you not then see the absurdity of this, my good Fathers? And is it necessary, in order to complete your confusion, to bring forward the words of M. de St. Cyran, in the same letter, in which he speaks of the sacrifice of the Mass as the *most excellent* of all, saying, "Offer then to God, daily, and in all places, the sacrifice of the Body of his Son, who could devise no more *excellent* way than this of honouring his Father." And again; "Christ at his death commanded us to partake of his sacrificed Body, in order to render more acceptable to God the sacrifice of our own, and to unite himself to us in death; and in order, further, by his presence to strengthen us in our final offering to our Maker, of our body and our life." Keep all this in the back-ground, Réverend Sirs; and fail not to say, as you have indeed done at p. 33, "that the writer opposed the act of Communion at death, and disbelieved the sacrifice of the Mass." Nothing, believe me, is too daring for slanderers by profession.

To this remark your second proof bears striking witness. In order to convict of Calvinism the late M. St. Cyran, to whom you attribute the work of "Petrus Aurelius," you produce a passage in which the latter, at p. 89, explains the manner in which the Church proceeds in the deposition and degradation of priests, and also of bishops. "The Church," he says, "being unable to take from them the character of their order, because it is in itself ineffaceable, does all that she can; she blots out from her own memory the character, which cannot be extinguished in the minds of those who have once received it. She

regards them as ceasing to be priests or bishops ; so that, according to the ordinary language of the Church, they may be said no longer to be such, although the character itself must always remain : ‘ *ob indelebitatem characteris.*’ ” You here see, my Fathers, that this writer, receiving the approval of three General Assemblies of the French clergy, declares explicitly that the character of the priesthood is ineffaceable ; while you, nevertheless, make him, in the very same passage, assert the direct reverse, viz. “ that the character of the priesthood is *not* ineffaceable.” Here I convict you, then, of flagrant calumny—or, according to your doctrines, of a “ petty and venial offence ! ” The book, in fact, has done your Society an injury, by its refutation of the heresies of your brethren in England, respecting the episcopal authority. But see the palpable folly you have fallen into. Having ignorantly supposed M. St. Cyran to hold the effaceability of the priestly character, you thence conclude that he disbelieves the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist !

Now, you must not expect me, my Fathers, to reply to this point. If your common sense fails you, I cannot furnish you with a supply. All who possess any, must laugh at such a conclusion, as also at your third proof, which you found on the following expressions from the ‘ Freq. Comm. 3rd part, ch. 11 ; ’ “ God gives us in the Eucharist the same food as the saints in heaven, without any difference ; excepting that here he withholds from us the sensible sight and taste, reserving both the one and other for the heavenly blessedness.” Truly, my Fathers, these words express so plainly the intention of the Church, that I am at a loss to think what there is in them to

censure. I see in them nothing but what the Council of Trent inculcates, Less. 13, c. 8, that there is no other difference between Christ in the Eucharist and Christ in the heavens, than that here he is under a veil, and there unveiled. M. Arnauld does not say that there is no other difference in the way of receiving Jesus Christ ; but only, there is no other in Christ, whom we receive. Notwithstanding which, you would represent him as saying in this passage, contrary to all sound reason, that (in the elements) we, on earth, no more receive the body of Christ in the mouth, than we shall do in heaven : and thence you charge him with heresy.

You really, Reverend Sirs, excite my pity. Is it possible that further explanation is necessary ? Can you be so obtuse as to confound the sacred nourishment in question, with the mode in which it is received ? There is only this one point of difference between this nourishment, as partaken of on earth and in heaven ; and that is, that here it is under a veil which conceals it from the sensible sight and taste. But there are various differences in the manner of receiving it here and there ; the principal of which is, as M. Arnauld says, 3rd part, ch. 16. " Here it is corporeally received both by the just and by the wicked ; but in heaven it shall not be so."

If you are not aware then of the reason of this distinction, I must inform you. The diversity in the manner of receiving this sacred nourishment, arises from the difference in the state of Christians in this life, and of the blessed in heaven. Christians, as says Cardinal Perron, following the views of the Fathers, hold a middle position between that of the blessed and that of the Jews. The blessed

possess Jesus positively, without a figure, and without a veil. The Jews possessed only the emblems and the shadows of Christ, such as the manna and the paschal lamb. And Christians have him in the Eucharist, in reality and truth, but yet covered as with a veil. "God," says St. Eucher, "has formed for himself three tabernacles; the Synagogue, which has only his shadow, without reality; the Church, which has reality, and also shadows; and Heaven, where there are no shadows, but reality alone." We should depart from our present state, that of faith (which St. Paul opposes both to the law and to the perfect vision), if we possessed only the figures, without Christ himself; because it is the property of the law to have only the shadows and not the substance of things. And we should depart from it also, if we possessed him visibly; because faith, as the same apostle says, is not founded on things that are seen. Thus the Eucharist is strictly adapted to our condition of faith, because it contains the reality of Christ, but veiled. So that this condition would be destroyed if Christ were not really in the substances of bread and wine, as the heretics maintain; and it would also be destroyed if we received him unveiled, as in the heavens; for this would be to confound our proper condition, on the one side with that of Judaism, and, on the other, with that of glory.*

Behold then, Reverend Fathers, the sources, mysterious and divine, in which this ineffable mystery originates!

* The reasoning throughout these elaborate passages is specious and beautiful, but how easily overthrown by the severer deductions of an enlightened Protestantism! Happily the repositories of our polemical divinity contain ample stores for the refutation of these views. (Transl.)

This is what causes us to shrink from the Calvinistic doctrine, as reducing us to the condition of Judaism; and bids us aspire to the glory of the blessed, which will bestow upon us the full and eternal enjoyment of Jesus. From hence you will see that there are various diversities in the mode of participation between Christians and the Blessed—among others, that, here, the Redeemer's body is taken corporeally, but not so in heaven; all which, however, resolves itself into the one great difference between the state of faith, in which we are placed here, and the state of sight and fruition to be enjoyed hereafter. And this is what has been most clearly expressed by M. Arnauld, as follows, "There must be no other difference in the purity of those who receive Christ in the Eucharist, and that of the glorified, except that which exists between the state of faith and the clear vision of God; whence alone arises the difference in the mode of participating in him, in earth and in heaven." You ought, my Fathers, to have revered the sanctity and truth of these expressions, instead of perverting them to a charge of heresy; which dwelt only in your own imagination, but never had the slightest existence in the mind of the author.

You see then, Sirs, that these your boasted proofs are lamentable failures. Your next resource is a novel kind of artifice, namely, a falsification of the Council of Trent, in order to prove a deviation from its views on the part of M. Arnauld;—so various are your methods of proving all the world heretics but yourselves! This is achieved by your Père Meynier, in fifteen passages in his work, and eight or ten in that single page (54) wherein he pretends to say, that, for the catholic sense, it is not sufficient to

declare, "I believe Jesus Christ to be really present in the Eucharist;" but we ought to say, "I believe, *with the Council*, that he is there present, with a true *local presence*, or *locally*." And then he quotes the Council, Sess. 13, can. 3, can. 4, 6. Now, who would not believe, seeing the term "*local presence*," cited from three canons of a universal Council, but that it must actually be in those canons? This might have served your purpose, previous to my 15th letter; but now it is of no avail. We refer to the records of the Council, and we there discover your imposition; for these terms, "*local presence, locally, locality*," are nowhere to be found; and furthermore, I affirm they exist not in any part of the proceedings of the Council, nor in those of any former one, nor in the writings of any Father of the Church whatever!

I request you to tell me if we are to hold all under suspicion of Calvinism who have not made use of these expressions? If so, then the Council of Trent lies under that suspicion, together with all the holy Fathers, without exception! Can you find no other means to charge heresy upon Arnould, than by injuring so many who have done nothing to incur your censure? Among others, is St. Thomas to be charged with error—the most signal of the champions of the Eucharist; and who, so far from adopting the expression in question, has, on the contrary, studiously rejected it—3rd pt. quæst 76, a. 5—saying, "Nullo modo corpus Christi est in hoc sacramento *localiter*?" Where is your authority, Reverend Sirs, to impose, at your mere will, novel terms for the explanation of the true faith; as if the confession appointed by the

Pope in Council, in which no such terms are found, were actually defective and ambiguous ; and you alone were competent to supply such defect, and rectify such ambiguity ? I know not which most to admire, the audacity which presumes to dictate such expressions to the learned ; the falsehood of attributing them to our general Councils ; or the ignorance which keeps you unconscious of the difficulty they present to the minds of the most enlightened saints ! You should “ blush,” O Fathers, “ at your ignorant impostures,” as the Scripture addresses persons such as yourselves : “ De mendacio ineruditionis tuæ confundere.”

Aspire not then any longer to the character of Masters of Theology : you have neither reputation nor qualifications for the office. Would you however put forward your dogmas with somewhat more modesty, they might meet with attention ; for, although, as we have seen, this term “ local presence ” has been rejected by St. Thomas, because the body of Christ is not contained in the Eucharist, to the ordinary extent of bodily substances, yet has the expression been admitted by some recent controversialists ; inasmuch as they only understand by it that the Saviour’s body is really covered by the substances ; and, therefore, these substances having specific locality, the body of Jesus is there also. In this sense, M. Arnauld scruples not to admit it, because both M. St. Cyran and himself have ever declared that Jesus Christ, in the Eucharist, is actually in a specific place, as also, in a miraculous manner, in several places at the same time. Thus do all your subtleties fall to the ground ; and you are seen to fail in giving the slightest colour to accusations,

which ought never to have been advanced but on the most irrefragable proofs.

But what, after all, avails it, my Fathers, to confront the innocence of these objects of your persecution with your calumnies? You attribute to them these errors, not in the belief that they actually entertain them, but because their opinions are prejudicial to yourselves. This, according to your system of theology, allows you to slander them without a crime; and you can, without confession or penitence, perform the sacred office of the mass at the very time you are imputing to ecclesiastics, that, while daily performing the same service, they believe it to be a sheer idolatry;—a sacrilege this, so atrocious, that you yourselves caused to be hung in effigy your own member; Père Jarrige,* for having performed mass at *the time* that he was *in correspondence with Geneva*.

What surprises me then, is, not that you should thus unscrupulously deal out these charges, so scandalous and yet so false, but that you should imprudently impute crimes so little likely to have been committed. You know how to attach the stigma of offences at your will; but do you suppose you can as easily incline men's belief to your purposes?

Truly, my Fathers, if the suspicion of Calvinism must necessarily attach either to them or to you, your case would be a very bad one. Their language is as strictly catholic as yours; but their conduct confirms their faith, and yours contradicts it:—for if you believe as they do,

* A celebrated Jesuit who went over to the Huguenots, and on his apostacy published a work entitled "The Jesuit on the Scaffold," in which he reproached the Jesuits with the most odious acts. (French Editor.)

that this bread is really changed into the body of the Redeemer, why do you not also, with them, demand that the hard and icy hearts of those whom you invite to its participation be also truly changed to penitence and love? If you believe that Christ is there exhibited in his state of mortality, in order to teach those who approach him to die to the world, to sin, and to themselves, how can you invite to his altar such as are conscious of vice and criminal passions in all their vitality and strength within their bosoms? How dare you judge those worthy to partake of the bread of heaven, for whom even that of earth is too good?

Oh, worthy guardians of this sacred mystery!—whose zeal is expended in persecuting those that do it real honour by so many holy appliances; and flattering such as dishonour it by the most sacrilegious corruptions! Most fitting is it in these champions of a sacrifice so pure and adorable, to crowd the Saviour's table with hardened sinners, reeking from their infamies; and to place in the midst of them a priest, dismissed, in his turn, by his confessor to the altar from recent impurities—there, as the representative of Christ, to offer that immaculate victim to the God of Holiness, and bear it in his polluted hands to mouths equally polluted! Well does it become those who, according to the sanctions and maxims of their own Chief, bear these practices over the whole world, to impute to the author of the "Frequent Communion," and to the "Sisters of the Holy Sacrament," disbelief in this their most revered and cherished institution!

But even this was not enough. In their implacable malice, they must proceed further, and accuse these holy

persons of a renunciation of Christ, and of their baptism ! Deem, not, Reverend Sirs, these things to be fictions, such as you deal in ; they are mournful instances of the 'outrages to which your calumnious propensities can lead. So flagrant a falsehood would not have found a supporter befitting its enormity in the person alone of your worthy comrade Filleau, with whom, at your instigation, it originated : your Society must give it their *own* public sanction ; and your Père Meynier has just come forward with the assertion (as an undoubted fact) that the Port Royal has, during the last thirty-five years, been the seat of a secret cabal, (of which M. de St. Cyran and M. D'Ypres were the heads) " to overthrow the mystery of the Incarnation ; to pass off the gospel for an apocryphal history ; to exterminate the Christian religion, and elevate a system of Deism upon the ruins of Christianity." Is this, my Fathers, sufficient ? Will you be satisfied with establishing such imputations as these against the objects of your hate ? Will your animosity be now assuaged, when you have made them objects of aversion, not only to the whole Church, by means of the alleged " accordance with Geneva," but also with all who believe in Jesus Christ, by their horror of " infidelity," of which you accuse them ?

But who, let me ask, are they whom you expect to convince, on *your* sole assertion (without the slightest real proof, and in the face of all imaginary contradictions) that these ecclesiastics—who preach alone the grace of Christ, the purity of the Gospel, and the obligations of the baptismal vow—that they have renounced their baptism, the Gospel, and their Redeemer ? Who, I say, would believe

it? Unhappy men! * Do you believe it yourselves? How low are you sunk, that you are reduced either to furnish proof that these objects of your malevolence are really unbelievers, or, failing such proof, to pass for the most abandoned of calumniators! Bring forward, Fathers, your evidence. Name the distinguished ecclesiastic, who you say was present at that assembly of “the Bourg Fontaine” in 1621, and revealed to your Père Filleau the design then concocted to “destroy the Christian religion:” name the six persons, who you allege, banded themselves together in that foul conspiracy: name the person designated by the initials A. A. (who you say, at p. 15, “is not Antoine Arnauld,” because he has proved to you that at that time he was not nine years old) “but *another* person still living, and too much a friend of M. Arnauld to be unknown to him.” You then, Sirs, are acquainted with the party; and, if you would not be held destitute of all piety yourselves, you are bound to denounce him to the King and the Parliament, that he may meet the punishment he merits. You must speak out; you must produce names; or be hereafter regarded as having forfeited all title to belief! It is in this way that the worthy Père Valerian has shown us how to torture and put down impostors of this description. Your silence will now be regarded as a full and entire acknowledgment of this diabolical slander. The most deluded of your supporters will be constrained to acknowledge, “that this is not a proof of your virtue, but of your impotence.”

They will wonder also that you should have dared to extend your unprincipled attacks against the Sisters of

* ‘Miserables que vous êtes.’ (Fr.)

the Port Royal: stating as you do at p. 14, that the "Secret Chapelet of the Holy Sacrament," (composed by one of them) was the first fruit of that conspiracy against Christ; and at p. 95, "thus they are all imbued with the detestable maxims of that effusion;" which, according to your statement, is an "instruction in Deism." Your imposture respecting this production has been already effectually exposed in the answer to the censure of the late Archbishop of Paris against your Père Brisacier. You could find nothing to say in rejoinder; and yet you persist in your shameless deception, for the purpose of attributing to a body of females, whose piety has been hitherto universally acknowledged, the very acme of impiety!

Cruel and dastardly persecutors! Could the hallowed privacy of the cloister furnish no shelter from your calumnies? While these holy women were, in punctual obedience to the rules of their institution, adoring, night and day, their Redeemer in his sacrament, it was your magnanimous office, by day and by night, to proclaim to the world that they believed Him not to be present in his own institution, or even in his ascended glory at the right hand of the Father; and, at the very time that they were pouring out their secret prayers for yourselves and for the Universal Church, your unremitting aim was to thrust them out from her maternal bosom. You calumniate those who have no ears to listen, and no mouth to reply. But Jesus, their Lord, in whose heart they are now hidden, to be one day manifested together with him—he hears your insults, and will undertake their defence. The day will come when that sacred and awful voice shall be heard on their behalf, to the astonishment of the world,

but to the consolation of the Church ! And, much I fear, my Fathers, that those who now harden their hearts, and obstinately turn from Him when he speaks as their God, will hear him with unspeakable terror, when he addresses them as their Judge !

For, in fine, Reverend Sirs, what account, I ask, will you be able to render of such calumnies as these, when examined, not according to the fictions of your Dicastillus, your Gans, and your Pennalossa, by which they may indeed, after a fashion, be justified ; but according to the rules of Eternal Truth, and by the ordinances of the Church ; which, so far from excusing, holds the offence in such abhorrence as to denounce against it the punishment of a wilful homicide ? By the 1st and 2nd Council of Arles, the communion is withheld, even to the hour of death, from calumniators, equally with murderers. The Council of Lateran held those who had been convicted of the offence, to be unfit for ecclesiastical office, although they had recanted their error. The popes have ever threatened such as should slander bishops, priests, or deacons, with refusing the communion at death. And the authors of a defamatory work, who are found unable to prove their allegations, are sentenced by Pope Adrian to "*be flogged*,"—yes, my Reverend Fathers, "*flagellentur*:" so much has the Church ever repudiated the errors of your corrupt Society, which justify in others these flagrant crimes, that they may practise them themselves with impunity.

And truly, my Fathers, the consequences of such conduct would have been most fatal, had not Providence so ordered it, that you should yourselves furnish the means

of counteracting the evil, and rendering your impostures ineffectual; for it is only necessary that your outrageous rule should be known, (by which this practice is exempted from criminality) in order to divest it of all authority. Calumny is ineffective unless it proceeds from those who have some reputation for truth. The slanderer fails of his aim if he be not believed to be one abhorring and incapable of slander. Thus, Sirs, your own principle betrays you! You have ingeniously invented it for the ease of your consciences; for you would not wish to incur damnation by your defamation; but aspire to be of the number of those "*holy* and *pious* calumniators" spoken of by St. Athanasius. To save yourselves from hell, you cling to this maxim, which, on the faith of your doctors, assures you of safety. But this very maxim, which guarantees you, on their authority, from the terrors in a life to come, deprives you in the present of all the advantage you looked for from your practices. Hoping to avoid the criminality of slander, you lose its fruit: the crime is its own counteractive; and embarrasses and destroys itself by its inherent wickedness.

You would therefore practise your calumnies with more benefit to yourselves, were you simply to allow, with St. Paul, that slanderers—"maledici"—shall not see God. Then would your malevolences receive more credit, although in reality you would but condemn yourselves. But in saying, as you do, that calumny against your enemies is no crime, neither will your slanders be believed, nor will you escape the Divine retribution which is their due. For, be assured, my Fathers, your profoundest authorities will contend in vain against the immutable

justice of God ; and you can give no plainer proof that you are not “ of the Truth,” than by having recourse to such inventions as these.

Were Truth on your side, she would combat for you—she would conquer for you : and—whatever enemies opposed—“ Truth,” according to the promise, “ would deliver you from them. ‘ You resort to falsehood, to sustain the errors with which you lull the consciences of the worldly and reprobate ; and to oppress with calumny those pious persons who denounce them. Truth being opposed to both these ends, you are seen to “ put your confidence in lies,” as the prophet Isaiah says (ch. xxviii.) You have said, “ when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us ; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.” But what says the prophet in reply at ch. xxx. ? “ Thus saith the Holy one of Israel, because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay therein ; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, and whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall break it in pieces as the breaking of a potter’s vessel : he shall not spare : so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth.” “ Because,” as says another prophet, “ ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad ; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life : I will deliver my people out of your hand ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord ! ”

Yes, Sirs, it must be our hope that, if a change do not

take place in your principles, God will interpose to withdraw from your hands those whom you have so long misled, whether by leaving their irregularities unchecked by your own example, or poisoning their minds by your misrepresentations. He will do this, by showing to the one that the fallacies of your Casuists will afford them no plea against his righteous anger; the others he will inspire with a just fear of perdition, from listening to and believing your impostures—a perdition to be shared with those who invented and circulated them throughout the world. I warn you—be not deceived! God will not be mocked! Nor can that sacred precept of his Gospel be broken with impunity, that we condemn not our neighbour without cause. Whatever be the pious professions of those who thus lend themselves to your falsehoods—whatever their pretences of devotional exactness—let them know that they run the risk of exclusion from God's kingdom, be it only for this one crime—that they have dared to impute the guilt of heresy and schism to orthodox priests and sainted females, upon no other proofs than the gross impostures which you have supplied. “Satan,” says M. de Genève, “is on the tongue of him who slanders, and in the ear of him who listens.” “Slander,” says St. Bernard, *Serm. 24, in Cant.* “is a poison which extinguishes charity, in both the utterer and the receiver. So that a single calumny may be destructive to an infinite number of souls, since it ruins not only those who publish it, but those also who do not reject it.”

P. S. My letters, Reverend Fathers, have not been wont heretofore to follow so quickly, nor extend to such

length. My *limited* time is the cause both of the one and the other. I have been obliged to make the present too *long*, for the very reason that I had not time to make it *shorter*. The cause of my being compelled to hasten, as I have done, is better known to you than to me. Your replies are not too successful. You have done right in changing your method of proceeding; but I do not know that you have yet made a happy choice; and whether the world will not say, that you were afraid of the *Benedictines*.

I have just learnt that the person to whom every one attributed your apologies disavows them, and resents the imputation. He is right; and I have injured him by my suspicion; for however strong were the reports, I might have thought he possessed too sound a judgment to believe your impostures, and too much honour to publish, without believing them. There are few people in the world capable of those excesses which are your peculiar characteristic, and which are too distinctive of your character to allow you to pass undetected. The universality of the report misled me; but this excuse, which might serve *your* purpose, is insufficient to exonerate *me*, who take credit for advancing nothing without absolute proof—and, in fact, have not done so in any instance but this. I hereby express my regret and my disavowal; and I wish *you* may follow my example.

LETTER XVII.

ADDRESSED TO R. P. ANNAT, JESUIT.*

REVEREND FATHER, *January 23, 1657.*

I HAD been led to suppose that it was your wish that we should mutually repose from our controversies; and I, for my part, was equally disposed to do so. But you have very recently issued so large a number of publications, as to make it evident that no peace can be an assured one, which is dependent upon the silence of Jesuits. I doubt whether this renewed rupture may prove to your advantage; but, for myself, I cannot regret the opportunity it affords me of effectually demolishing this hackneyed reproach of heresy with which you are in the habit of filling your writings.

It is time then that I should, once for all, silence these baseless charges, which, with growing audacity, you urge against me. You have repeated them in your latest publications, and that in such a form as is not to be longer endured in silence: not to make, indeed, this public reply would expose me to suspicion. I had treated

* See Appendix, No. V. 'Annat.'

these aspersions, and many other of the like nature in the writings of your confederates, with the contempt they deserve. My Fifteenth Letter furnished to them a sufficient reply : but you now reproduce them in a different form. You put them forward deliberately, in the very front of your defence ; they are almost the only means you employ for the purpose. I find you saying “ that it is a sufficient reply to my *Fifteen* Letters, to repeat for the *Fifteenth* time, that I am a heretic ; and, after that, I am entitled to no belief.” In fact, no further doubt is to be entertained of my apostacy ; it is to be assumed as incontrovertible : and your further conclusions are to be founded upon it as a fact. Well and good, my Father ; you are to treat me as a heretic, and it must be my business now to reply to the charge.

You cannot but be aware that this imputation is so serious, that it is an indecent temerity in any one to advance it, without the means of proof. I ask you, then, what proofs do you possess ? When was I ever seen at Charenton ? When have I failed in my attendance at the services of the Church, or been wanting in any other duties of a Christian, to the Communion to which he belongs ? When did I ever make common cause with heretics, or join any schismatical Body ? What Council have I opposed ? What ordonnance of the Papacy have I violated ? I demand, Reverend Father, a reply, or — : you understand what follows. And what is the kind of reply you make ? I ask the whole world to witness it. You assume first of all, “ that the writer of the Letters belongs to the Port Royal.” You then say, “ The Port Royal has been declared heretical : ” whence you draw

the conclusion, that the writer of the Letters is declared heretical. It is not then upon me that the force of your accusation falls, but upon the Port Royal; and you only make me a party to it because you suppose I belong to her. I shall then have little trouble in establishing my defence; for I have nothing to do but to declare that I do *not* belong to that Society, and to refer you to my Letters, in which I have stated that "I stand alone;" and declared in express terms, "I do not belong to Port Royal." All which you find in my Sixteenth Letter—the one immediately preceding your publication.

You must discover, then, some other way to prove me a heretic, or the whole world will see the impotency of the charge. Show from my writings that I hold not the constitutions of the Church. They are not so numerous; there are but Sixteen Letters to examine; and I defy you, or any human being, to produce from them the slightest proof of the charge. But the very reverse is really the fact. For when I state (for instance,) in my Fourteenth Letter, "In taking the life of a brother, in the commission of mortal sin, we destroy a soul for which Christ died," do I not plainly acknowledge that Christ died for these destroyed souls; and that it is therefore false "that He died only for the Elect," which is condemned in the 5th Proposition? It is therefore certain that I have not advanced a syllable in support of these impious propositions, which I detest from the bottom of my heart. And if even the Port Royal held them, I assert that this would establish nothing against me; because I am, God be praised, wholly devoted to the Catholic, Apostolical and Roman Church, in which alone I desire to live and to die,

and in communion with her supreme and Papal Head—and out of which I believe there is no salvation.*

What will you then do with a person who holds such language as this? How attack one, whose language and writings furnish no ground of accusation, and whose very obscurity throws around him a shield impervious to your threats? You find yourselves struck by an invisible hand, which exposes your delinquencies to the whole world; and you endeavour in vain to wound me, in the persons of those to whom you believe I belong. I fear you not for myself, or for others: I am attached neither to communities nor to individuals. All your power, all your influence are directed against me in vain. From the world I have nothing to hope—nothing to fear—nothing to desire. Endued by a grace which is from above, I have need of nothing that the wealth or authority of man can supply. It is in this way, my Father, that I am invulnerable to all your devices. Aim from what side you will, and it will be to no purpose. You may wound the Port Royal, but you touch not me! The whole Sorbonne might be discomfited, but *I* should be unmoved. You may threaten and annoy ecclesiastics and doctors, but you cannot injure me, who am none of these. Never could you have encountered one so screened from your assaults, and so fitted to combat your errors—one independent—isolated—without party—without tie—

* It may perhaps be remembered, that, in the brief Memoir prefixed* to these pages, an opinion was hazarded, that if added years had furnished the lamented Pascal with the opportunity to contrast more maturely the systems of Popery and Protestantism, the above declaration of his sincere, but misguided belief, would have been the foremost that he would have been eager to retract. (Transl.)

without professional bias—without encumbering occupation—one also well versed in your principles; and determined—as God shall enable him—to expose and denounce them without suffering any earthly consideration to avert or mitigate his hostility!

How will it benefit you then, Reverend Sir, since against *me* your efforts are fruitless—to persist, as your writers do, in persecuting with their defamations persons wholly unconnected with our controversies? These subterfuges shall avail you nothing; you shall feel in all its rigour the force of the *truth* which I array against you. I tell you, that you annihilate all Christian morality, in severing it from the love of God, and dispensing man from its obligations; and you talk to me of “the death of the Père Mester,” a work which I never saw in the whole course of my life. I charge upon your authors, that they allow the life of man to be taken for an *apple*, if disgrace attend the loss of it; and you reply, “a poor-box has been opened at Saint Merri!” Why am I perpetually to be taxed on the subject of the work “on the Holy Virginity,”* written by a Father of the “Oratoire,” when I never saw either the author or his book? It is a happy idea indeed to regard all who are opposed to you as one. Your hatred seems to view them as a single antagonist, and would make each of them answer for the acts of the whole.

* This book on the Holy Virginity is a translation by the Père Seguenot, Priest of the Oratoire, of a work of St. Augustine. In the original there was nothing to censure; but the Father added to it some extravagant remarks, which incurred deserved animadversion: and as this work proceeded from a Father of the “Oratoire,” whose members had been always attached to the doctrines of St. Augustine, it was sought to throw the blame of the publication upon the Jansenists. (Note, Edit. 1812.)

There is, however, an important difference between the Jesuits and those opposed to them. You, in reality, are one united Body, under one Head; and your rules, as I have proved, forbid you to publish any thing *without the sanction* of your Superiors, who take upon themselves the responsibility of the errors of *each* individual member; “without the power of excusing themselves by alleging that they had not noticed any specified errors,” seeing that they *ought* to have noticed them, “according to your own ordinances, and the mandates of your chiefs, Aquaviva, Wittelleschi, &c.” It is with justice then that the errors of individual members are charged upon your whole Society, since your writings are sanctioned by your Superiors, and your incorporate Theologians. But for myself, my Reverend Father, your rule of judgment should be different. I have given no sanction to the work “on the Holy Virginity.” All the Poor-Boxes in Paris might be opened, and I should be no worse a Catholic. And, in fact, I tell you plainly and openly, that no one is answerable for my Letters *büt myself*, and that I am answerable for nothing but *my Letters*.

I might stop here, Sir, and abstain from saying any thing of those other persons whom you charge with heresy, for the purpose of including me in the accusation. But as it is, I, who have been the occasion of it, feel bound in some measure to draw from the present opportunity this three-fold advantage. It is one important point to substantiate the innocence of so many persons under accusation: it is another—and one especially suited to my main object—to hold up on all occasions the artifices to which it is your policy to resort in bringing the

charge. But that which I value most of all is, that I shall, by this means, be enabled to exhibit to the whole world the falsity of that scandalous report which you have spread on all sides, "That the Church is rent asunder by a new Heresy." And as you have succeeded in imposing upon multitudes by making them believe that the points upon which you endeavour to excite such clamour are essential articles of Faith, I think it of high importance to destroy those false impressions, and to explain in this place clearly in what these things consist, while I demonstrate at the same time that there are in reality no heretics in the Church.

For is it not a fact that if the question be asked, in what consists the heresy of those whom you call Jansenists, the reply promptly is, they hold, "that the commandments of God are of impossible observance; grace is irresistible; man has no power of doing good, or ill; Christ died not for all, but only for the Elect; and, finally, they receive the five Propositions condemned by Rome?" Do you not distinctly avow it to be on these grounds that you follow up your persecution? Is not this the burthen of your writing, your conversation, your Catechisms? Did you not do this at Easter, and the Fête St. Louis, when you asked the young country-girls, "Who did Christ come down for, my child?" "For all men, Father." "What, my child, then you are not one of these new kind of heretics who say that he only came for the Elect?"

Of course the children believe all this, and a great deal more; for you entertain them with the same kind of fictions in your sermons: like your Père Crasset of Orleans, who has been placed under interdict for it. I

confess, I myself believed these things formerly. You were successful in impressing me with the like ideas of all those persons; so that when you pressed them upon these Propositions, I was very observant of their reply, and could not feel fully satisfied until they had renounced them as utter impieties. But this I found they did, in the most distinct manner. For M. de St. Beuve, the King's Professor in Sorbonne, publicly denounced in his writings these five Propositions, long before the Pope had done so; and these doctors put forth several publications about the same time (among others, that "on victorious grace,") in which they rejected the propositions in question, as both heretical in themselves and unknown in theology. "For," as they say in the Preface, "these Propositions are heretical and Lutheran, fabricated, and gratuitous inventions, and found neither in Jansenius nor his defenders:"—these are their own expressions. They complain of having such sentiments attributed to them, and apply to you the words of St. Prosper, the first disciple of St. Augustine, their master, to whom the semi-Pelagians of France imputed views of the same kind, in order to bring odium upon him. "There are some persons," says this holy man, "so blinded by a passion to decry us, that they resort to means destructive of their own reputation: for they have designedly fabricated certain propositions full of impiety and blasphemies, which they circulate on all sides, in order to induce the belief that we maintain these principles. But we shall prove, in this our reply, both our own innocence, and the malice of those who impute these impieties to us, and of which they are themselves the sole inventors."

Now, my good Father, when I heard language such as this from them, before the issuing of the "Constitution;" when I saw the deep respect with which they received that decree; when I found that they offered voluntarily to subscribe to it, and that all this was declared by M. Arnauld in his second Letter, in terms much more energetic than I can employ,—all these things made it impossible for me any longer to doubt of their good faith. And, in truth, those who had been indisposed to absolve their friends, previous to the Letter of M. Arnauld, have since then declared, that as he had so clearly disavowed the errors imputed to him, they saw no longer any reason to exclude him, or his friend, from the pale of the Church. But your treatment of them was of a very different kind; and from that time it was, that I was led to suspect passion and prejudice to be your guides.

For, after having used threats to induce them to sign the "Constitution" in question, when you supposed them to be averse to it; as soon as you found them inclined, of themselves, to take that step, nothing more was heard from you on the subject. And although it might have been thence inferred that you were satisfied with their conduct, we found you still not scrupling to treat these persons as heretics; "on the ground," as you allege, "that their heart contradicted their head; and while they were externally professing themselves to be Catholic, they were internally heretics," according to your own expression in your "Reply to certain questions," p. 27 and 47.

Now, my Father, all this seemed to me most remarkable. Who is there, I pray, that might not in this way

be liable to the same kind of cavils? And see too the vexatious consequences to which such conduct leads. "If we refuse," says St. Jerome, "to believe those who make profession of faith in conformity with the doctrines of the Church, we cast suspicion upon the belief of all Catholic persons." Regist. l. v. Ep. 15. I fear then, my Father, "that your object was to attach the stigma of heretic to those who are in reality not such;" as the same Pope says in reference to a similar controversy in his time; "for," says he, "it is not opposition to, but a creation of heresy, to discredit those who openly profess the true faith: '*hoc non est hæresim purgare, sed facere.*' Ep. 16." Now it was a clear proof to me that there was no heresy in the matter, when I found that you could convict these persons of no error in faith, but were obliged to attack them upon certain matters of fact, respecting Jansenius, and such as could involve no question of heresy. For your real aim was, as you yourselves wrote, to compel them to acknowledge that "these Propositions were to be found '*word for word,*' in Jansenius; '*singulares, individuae, totidem verbis, apud Jansenium contentæ*'—Cavilli, p. 39."

From that moment, your dispute lost all importance in my eyes. As long as I had supposed that you were discussing the truth or falsehood of the Propositions themselves, I looked on with attention; for that was a matter in which belief was concerned. But when I found that the question with you was, merely, whether such and such words were to be found in Jansenius or not—religion not being involved—I was no longer interested. Not that I did not still suppose there was some probability in your

allegations; for as to the fact, whether certain expressions are to be found *word for word* in an author, it is difficult to conceive of a mis-statement. Therefore I was not surprised that so many persons, both in France and Rome, should, on the strength of such distinct statements, have believed that Jansenius really inculcated these sentiments. Judge then my astonishment, on learning that this very fact, put forth by you as so undoubted and so important, proves to be wholly unfounded; and that you are now defied, in vain, to produce the passage in Jansenius, in which, as you asserted, these expressions were actually word for word, to be found!

All this I state thus circumstantially, because it seems to me conclusive of the spirit that actuates your Society throughout this whole affair; and that the world may admire (as I do) that, notwithstanding all that has been now related, you should still persist in branding your opponents with the charge of heresy. But your method is, to vary their heresy with times and circumstances. As soon as they clear themselves from one charge, the plan of your brethren is, to bring forward another. Thus, in 1653, their heresy consisted in the *spirit* of the Propositions. Afterwards it was in the *letter*. After that, again, you found it in their own *heart*. But now, all this is gone by; and they are held to be heretics if they hesitate to subscribe, "that the substance of Jansenius' doctrine is to be found in the five Propositions."

This then is the subject of your present dispute. It is not sufficient that they should condemn the five Propositions, and everything also that is to be found in Jansenius, conformable to them, and opposed to St. Augus-

tin; for all this they do. Thus, for instance, it is no longer a question "whether Christ died only for the elect"—they condemn that as much as ourselves;—but, whether Jansenius is of that opinion or not? Therefore it is, that I declare more decidedly than ever, that your controversy interests me little; and equally little does it concern the Church. For, besides that I am no *Doctor*, any more than yourself, I see plainly, once for all, that the matter is not one of faith, but simply what is the opinion of Jansenius? If they believed that his doctrine was conformable to the strict and literal sense of these Propositions, they would condemn it; and they demur to do so, only because they are convinced that it is wholly different. Thus if they had even put a misconstruction upon it, they would not be guilty of heresy, because they construe it in a catholic sense.

And, to explain this, I will take, as an example, the diversity in the opinions of St. Basil and St. Athanasius, upon the writings of St. Denis of Alexandria. St. Basil, believing he perceived in these the doctrine of Arius, which impugn the equality of the Father and the Son, condemns them as heretical; while St. Athanasius, on the other hand, considering these same works to propound the true doctrine of the Church, maintains their catholicity. Do you think, Reverend Father, that St. Basil, though holding these writings to be Arian, would have been justified in charging St. Athanasius with heresy, because he defended them? On what ground could he have done so, since it was not Arianism that Athanasius therein defended, but the truth, which he believed he discovered in the book? If these holy men had been agreed as to the true meaning

of the writings, and both of them had seen the heresy they contained in them, then no doubt Athanasius could not have sanctioned them without heresy; but, differing as to the interpretation, Athanasius was orthodox in supporting them, even if he had misapprehended their meaning (his error being only one of fact), and in this doctrine he merely defended the true faith which he believed it to contain.

Now this, Sir, is what I maintain, in regard to yourselves. Were you agreed as to the meaning of Jansenism, and could all come to the same conclusion—as, for instance, that he maintains “that grace cannot be resisted”—those who refused to condemn him would be heretics? But while you are at variance as to his meaning; and some hold that, according to his doctrine, “Grace may be resisted;” you have no ground for charging such persons with heresy, whatever error you may attribute to him yourselves; since they condemn it in the sense which you attach to it; and you, on the other hand, would not venture to blame the proposition, according to the interpretation they put upon it. Would you desire to convince these persons, then, you must show that the meaning they attribute to Jansenius is heretical; for then they become partakers of the error. But how can you do this, while it is clear, on your own admission, that the construction they maintain is not to be condemned?

To illustrate this yet more clearly, I will assume, as a principle recognized by yourselves, that “the doctrine of effectual grace has never been condemned, but has been left untouched by Papal ordonnances.” And, in fact, when these five Propositions were passed in review, the

question of "effectual grace" was exempted from all censure; and this appears clearly from the opinions of the Arbitrators, to whom the Propositions were submitted. I have their decision in my possession—in common with several persons in Paris—among others M. the Bishop of Montpelier,* who brought them from Rome. From this document, it appears that the Arbitrators were divided in their opinions; and that the principal among them, such as the Master of the Sacred Palace, the Commissary of the Holy Office, the General of the Augustines; and others, considering that these propositions might be understood in the sense of effectual grace, held that they ought not to be censured; while others—still admitting that if that were their true meaning, they ought not to be condemned—maintained that they were censurable, because their true and natural construction was opposed to this interpretation. It was on this account that the Pope condemned them; and every one has concurred in his decision.

It follows then, certainly, that "effectual grace" is not condemned. So strenuously, indeed, is this doctrine maintained by St. Augustine, by St. Thomas, and his entire school, by so many Popes and Councils, and by universal tradition, that it would be impious to charge it with heresy. Now, all those whom you stigmatize as heretics, declare that they find in Jansenius no other thing than this very "effectual grace;" and this alone is

* The Bishop of Montpelier. This was Francis de Bosquet, at first Bishop of Lodeve, afterwards (in 1655) Bishop of Montpelier, who died in 1676. He was one of the most learned bishops of his time, and especially versed in all ecclesiastical matters. (Edit. 1812.)

what they have maintained in Rome. You yourself even have acknowledged it—"Cavill. p. 35," wherein you declare, "that, in the presence of the Pope, they said not a word about the Propositions—*ne verbum quidem*—but employed the whole of their time in speaking of "effectual grace." And thus, whether they deceive themselves in the supposition or not, it is at least placed beyond a doubt, that the interpretation they attach is not heretical; and, as a necessary consequence, they are not at all heretical in reality. For, in one word, either Jansenius has taught only the doctrine of "effectual grace," and, in that case, is not in error; or he has taught something else—and then, he has no defenders. The whole point then is, to ascertain whether Jansenius has actually inculcated any other principles than that of "effectual grace;"—If it be so, then you will have the praise of having better understood him than they; but they will not labour under the misfortune of having erred from the faith.

We have cause, then, my Father, for thankfulness to God, that there is in reality no heresy in the Church; since there is no other question than of a *fact*; and that cannot constitute heresy. The Church decides upon matters of faith with a divine authority, and excludes from her pale all who refuse to receive them. But she does not act thus with regard to matters of fact; and the reason is, that our salvation depends upon a faith in things revealed, preserved in the Church by tradition; but not upon facts, which have formed no part of the Divine revelation. We are therefore bound to believe that the commandments of God are not incapable of fulfilment; but we are not bound to be acquainted with what Jan-

senius teaches on the subject. It is in this way that the Almighty guides the Church in her determination of points of faith by the assistance of his Spirit, which cannot err; but in regard to facts, we are left to our senses and to reason, which are their natural arbiters. It was God alone who could have instructed the Church in her faith. But we have only to read Jansenius, in order to ascertain whether certain Propositions be contained in his Book: It follows, then, that it is a heresy to oppose the decisions of faith, because, in so doing, we are opposing our own wisdom to that which is Divine. But it is no heresy (although it may be not unattended with responsibility), to doubt of certain particular facts; for we are then only setting the deductions of reason (not, perhaps, wanting in far-sightedness) against an authority which, although high, cannot be infallible.

This is an axiom recognized by all theologians; as appears by the following opinion of Cardinal Bellarmine, a member of your Society: "General Councils, lawfully constituted, cannot err in defining dogmas of faith; but they may err as to question of fact." *De Sum. Potent. Lib. 4, c. 11.* And elsewhere: "The Pope, as Pope, and even as the head of the universal Council, may err in controversies as to particular facts, which depend chiefly upon the information and testimony of men." *C. 2.* And the Cardinal Baronius to the same effect says, "We must submit entirely to the decisions of Councils upon points of faith; but upon matters relating to individuals, or their writings, it has not been deemed necessary to be so guarded in our animadversions; because there are no persons who may not be occasionally mistaken."

Ad an. 681, N. 39. On this ground also, the Archbishop of Toulouse* has cited the following rule from the writings of the two great Popes, St. Leon and Pelagius II. : "The proper object of Councils is the regulation of faith ; and their decisions upon all other subjects may be open to investigation : but their ordonnances on matters of faith may not be questioned, because, as Tertullian says, the rules of faith are at once immutable and fixed."

This is the reason that the general Councils, legally constituted, have never been found at variance with each other on points of faith ; "because," as the Archbishop of Toulouse says, "it is not even permitted to examine anew what has been already decided on questions of faith." But, on the other hand, the very same Councils have been seen opposed to each other on facts which turn upon the statements or interpretation of an author. "For," says again our Archbishop, following the sentiments of the Popes before cited, "every thing settled in Councils, with the exception of points of faith, may be subjected anew to examination and revision." Thus it is that the 4th and 5th Council appear to be opposed to each other in their interpretation of the same authors ; and the same thing happened in the instance of two Popes, upon a proposition of certain monks of Scythia : for, after the Pope Hormisdas had condemned that proposition, on an interpretation, on his part, in an objectionable sense, the Pope John II., his successor, examining it afresh, and understanding it in an orthodox sense, sanctioned it with his

* M. de Marca. This illustrious prelate was Archbishop of Toulouse before his translation to the See of Paris, of which death prevented his taking actual possession. (French Ed.)

approbation, and declared it to be catholic. Would you thence say that one of these Popes must have been a heretic? Or will it not be acknowledged that, provided the heretical sense, which one of the Popes supposed he had found in the passage, be condemned, we are not blame-worthy in not condemning the passage itself, provided it be taken in a sense which another Pope has not condemned? For, otherwise, the one of these Popes must stand convicted of error.

I have been desirous, Reverend Father, to familiarize your mind with these contrarieties, common among the faithful in their interpretations of an author, as to matters of fact; and for this purpose, to show you one Father of the Church controverting another Father—one Pope another Pope—one Council another Council—in order to conduct you with me to the consideration of other instances of similar but more striking contrariety. For you will then see Councils and Popes, on the one side, and Jesuits on the other, diametrically opposed in opinion upon the interpretation of an author; without any imputation, on your part, upon such author, even of inconsideration—much less of heresy.

You well know, my Father, that the writings of Origen were condemned by various Councils and Popes, and even by the Fifth General Council, as containing heretical opinions; and among others that of “the reconciliation of devils at the day of judgment.” Do you on that account believe it to be necessary, in order to give proof of your catholicity, to allow that Origen actually maintained these views; and may it not be sufficient to condemn the errors themselves, without attributing them to

him? Were it indeed so, what would you do with your own Father Halloix, who has maintained the purity of Origen's faith; as well as several other Catholics who have done the same thing, such as Père La Mirande and Genebrard, doctors of Sorbonne? And is it not also a fact, that this very fifth General Council condemned the writings of Theodoret against St. Cyril, "as impious, opposed to the faith, and containing Nestorian heresy?" And, nevertheless, the Jesuit Father Sirmond has not shrunk from defending him, and stating, in his life of that Father, "that the writings in question are wholly untainted with the Nestorian heresy."

You see then, Sir, that when the Church condemns any works, she adjudges them to contain some fundamental error; and condemns them accordingly. It is on the ground of doctrine, then, that they are censured; and not on the question of fact, whether the writings actually contain the error so imputed. I assume this, however, to be now sufficiently established; and I shall close my illustrations by the well-known instance of Pope Honorius.

At the commencement of the seventh century, the Church being disturbed by the heresy of the Monothelites, the Pope, in order to terminate the controversy, issued a decree which seemed favourable to the heretics; so that many persons were scandalized at it. Little attention, however, was excited by the circumstance during his pontificate; but fifty years afterwards, on occasion of the Sixth General Council, at which Pope Agatho (through his legates) presided, this decree was referred to the Assembly; and, having been read and considered, was condemned, as containing Monothelistical heresies. On that

ground, it was publicly burnt, together with other writings of this sect. This decision was received with the utmost respect and unanimity throughout the Church, and subsequently confirmed by two other General Councils; and even by the Popes Leo II. and Adrian II., about two hundred years afterwards; nor did any one in fact attempt to disturb this general uniformity of opinion during the lapse of above seven or eight centuries. Notwithstanding all this, however, several writers of later times, and among others Cardinal Bellarmine, were not apprehensive of the suspicion of heresy, in maintaining, in the face of so many Popes and Councils, that the writings of Pope Honorius are utterly *free* from the heresy with which they were charged; "For," says he, "as there is no incapability of general Councils to fall into error upon questions of facts, it may be confidently asserted that the Sixth Council was mistaken as to the matter in dispute; and, not having rightly apprehended the meaning of Pope Honorius, in his documents, it has done him a wrong in classing him with heretics."

Mark then, my Father, that it is no heresy to say that Pope Honorius was not heretical, although various Popes and Councils, after mature deliberation, had passed such condemnation upon him. Then I come to the question between us; and you may put your case as strongly as you please. What is it that you assert, to prove heresy against your opponents? "The Pope Innocent has pronounced that the error of the 'Five Propositions' is contained in the writings of Jansenius." Admit this: what then is your conclusion? "It is therefore heretical not to admit that the error of the 'Five Propositions'

is in Jansenius." Now, I ask you, Sir, is not this a question of fact precisely similar to my precedents? The Pope has declared a certain error to be contained in Jansenius, just as his predecessors declared that the errors of the Nestorians and Monothelites were contained in the writings of Theodoret and Honorius. Upon which, your Fathers published to the world that they were unanimous with the Pope in condemning the heretics, but the parties in question demurred to the fact of their being contained in those writings. Just as in the former instance, your opponents condemn these five Propositions, but they do not admit that Jansenius has inculcated them. Truly, my good Father, the two cases are strictly parallel; and if there be any difference, it is obviously in favor of the present and later one, on a due comparison of all the circumstances, which however I stop not now to detail. I only ask, how it can be maintained that in cases strictly alike, your own Fathers are to be deemed catholic, and your present adversaries heretical; and by what strange conclusions you would deprive the latter of a privilege which has been heretofore conceded to all the faithful?

To this, however, you reply "that the Pope has confirmed his ordonnance by a Brief." I rejoin again, that two General Councils and two Popes confirmed the condemnation of Honorius' Letters. But what is it that you build upon in the expressions of this Brief, in which the Pope announces that "he has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius in these five Propositions?" What strength does this add to the ordonnance? What does it prove, but that, as the sixth Council condemned the doctrine of Honorius, conceiving it was identified with that of the

Monothelites ; so the Pope now says, he condemns the doctrine of Jansenius in these five Propositions, because he conceives it to be identified with those Propositions? And how could he do otherwise? Your Society was constantly re-iterating the assertion ; and you yourself, Reverend Sir—who had declared that “ word for word ” they were the same—you were at *Rome* (for in fact you are *everywhere*) at the very time the Censure was published. Could his holiness have suspected your veracity, or the authority of so many grave theologians? And how could he doubt that the doctrine of Jansenius was identical with that of the Propositions, after the assurance you had given him that those Propositions were “ word for word ” in his writings? It is evident then, that if it should be proved that Jansenius does not maintain them, it must not be said, according to the example set by your Fathers, that the Pope was mistaken as to the fact—a thing always to be deprecated—but that you have deceived the Pope. And so well are you in fact now known, that this cannot occasion any great increase of scandal.

Then, after all, my revered Father, we find little enough of heresy in this matter. But, determined at all hazards to prove it to be such, you have endeavoured to turn the question from one of fact into one of faith ; and this is the way in which you proceed: “ The Pope,” you say, “ declares that he condemns the doctrine of Jansenism in the five Propositions ; then it is in a question of faith that the doctrine of Jansenius respecting these Propositions (be it what it may) is heretical.” Now this is a strange point of faith, that a doctrine is heretical, be it what it may. What ! if, according to Jansenius, “ we

may resist the influence of internal grace ;” and if it be false, according to him, “ that Christ died only for the predestinated,” is this also to be condemned, because it is his doctrine ? Is it true, according to the Pope’s Ordinance, “ that we have power to do good or evil ;” and is the same proposition false in Jansenius ? By what unhappy fatality is it that truth becomes heresy if found in his writings ? Surely he can only be a heretic where he propounds heresy ! As, according to the pope and the bishops, “ the propositions are condemned in their proper and natural sense,” it is impossible that they should be condemned in the sense of Jansenius, unless such sense be proved to be their proper and natural one, which becomes a question of fact.

It is on fact, then, and nothing else, that our controversy turns. It can never be made a question of heresy ; but it might be made a pretext for persecution, were there not ground to hope that none could be found sufficiently devoted to your interests to adopt so unjust a procedure, and to pronounce as you would wish them to do, that “ these Propositions are condemned in the sense of Jansenius,” without explaining first, what is that sense. Few persons are disposed to sign a confession of faith, in *blank* ; and this would be, in truth, signing a blank which you might fill up for them, at your own pleasure ; as you would then be at liberty to interpret after your own fashion the unexplained meaning of Jansenius. Let this explanation be first given ; otherwise you would be indeed exercising over us a “ proximate ” power—“ *abstrahendo ab omni sensu.*” This, you well know, the world will not allow. Nothing is more universally odious

than ambiguity, especially in matters of faith. In them, common justice demands that we hear before we condemn. And how could those who are satisfied that Jansenius means nothing more than to maintain the doctrine of "effectual grace," be prevailed upon to pronounce a censure upon his tenets, without a due explanation of them? Entertaining, as they unalterably will, this conviction in regard to the author, such a censure would amount to a condemnation on their part of the doctrine of "effectual grace" itself—which would be in itself a crime. Would it not be a strange tyranny to expose them to this unhappy dilemma—either to incur guilt towards God, by signing this condemnation, against their conscience, or to be treated as heretics if they refuse to do it?

But there is, in reality, much of mystery in all this. Your proceedings are full of the deepest policy. You oblige me therefore to show why it is that you omit to explain the meaning of Jansenius. My great aim is to unravel your secret designs, and in so doing, to frustrate them. Let all then, who are unacquainted with the fact, know that, your main object in the controversy being to protect Molina's doctrine of a "sufficient grace," you can only accomplish this by overthrowing that of an "effectual grace," which is opposed to it. But as you find this latter doctrine at the present time sanctioned at Rome, and by the highest authorities in the Church; and you are thus precluded from attacking it, on its own merits; you proceed covertly to assail it under the name of the Doctrine of Jansenius. For this reason you have sought to procure his condemnation without explanation of his meaning; and to cause it to be believed that his doctrine

is not that of "effectual grace," in order that the censure of himself might not involve that of the doctrine. Here is the secret of all the efforts of your Society to prejudice those who are unacquainted with his writings. And this is what you yourself also, Reverend Father, have attempted in your "Cavill," p. 23, by the following subtle reasoning: "The Pope has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius; now the Pope has not condemned the doctrine of effectual grace; therefore the doctrine of effectual grace is not that of Jansenius." But, here I repeat, were this kind of syllogism conclusive of the arguments, it could equally be maintained that Honorius and all who support him are heretical. The sixth Council condemned the doctrine of Honorius; but the Council did not condemn the doctrine of the Church: then the doctrine of Honorius is not that of the Church; and all who defend it are heretics. It is evident that this proves nothing; since the Pope has condemned nothing but the doctrine of the five Propositions, which he had been induced to believe was that of Jansenius.

But all this is unimportant; for you will, I know, not *long* continue to avail yourself of this line of argument. Feeble as it is, however, it will last long enough to answer your purpose. It is needed by you only so far as to induce those who would not deny the doctrine of effectual grace, to condemn Jansenius, without a scruple. When that is achieved, your argument will be soon forgotten; and as the signatures will remain a perpetual witness of the censure of Jansenius, you will thence take occasion in due time directly to attack the doctrine in question, by this more specious argument: "The doctrine of Janse-

nus," you will say, "has been condemned by the unanimous consent of the whole Church: now, this doctrine is clearly that of "effectual grace," (this you will find no difficulty in proving) "then, this doctrine of "effectual grace" is condemned even by the voice of its defenders."

This is why you urge the condemnation of the doctrine without an explanation. And herein consists the advantage you hope for from the signatures you are soliciting. If your opponents demur to take that step, you have another resource. Skilfully uniting the question of fact with that of faith, without allowing a separation of the two, or the signature of the one without that of the other—as they cannot subscribe both, you proclaim to the world that they refuse both. And thus, although in reality they only refuse to admit that Jansenius held these propositions, which they condemn—which certainly is no heresy—you audaciously say, they have refused their condemnation of the propositions themselves,—which, were it true, would really be heretical.

In this way it is, that you derive as much advantage from their refusal as you would from their compliance. Whether they sign or not, you make your account of them; and whatever be their own inclination, your policy turns it to the promotion of your object.

Yes, my good Father, be assured, I know you all too well! It is my grief to see heaven abandoning you in permitting the success of such nefarious conduct! Your good fortune excites only my pity; and can be an object of envy to none but those who are ignorant wherein true prosperity consists. It is charity to yourselves to frustrate your pernicious aims! You build alone upon lies;

and seek to propagate but an alternative of falsehood. You will not rest till you prove that the Church has condemned the doctrine of effectual grace, or that those who defend it, maintain the censured Propositions !

The world then must be told, that, by your own confession, that sacred doctrine is *not* condemned; and, on the other hand, that no one in reality maintains these errors. Thus shall it be known, that those who refused to subscribe what you required, refused only on the ground of a fact: and, being willing to sign, as far as regarded the points of faith, their refusal had in it nothing of heresy. It is matter of faith that the Propositions are heretical, but it is not matter of faith that they are the doctrine of Jansenius. They are clear of error themselves: let that suffice. Possibly they may interpret Jansenius somewhat too favorably; but you, it is equally probable, do not interpret him with sufficient candour. This is a question which I enter not into. I know, alone, that on *your* principles, you believe yourselves at liberty to charge him with heresy, although you know the fact to be the contrary; while on theirs, they are forbidden even to testify to his catholicity, contrary to their own conviction. Thus *they* are more trust-worthy than you, Reverend Sir: they have more carefully examined Jansenius: they are not less capable than yourself of forming an intelligent judgment: they are not less entitled than your Society, to credit with the impartial. But however it may be as to the question of fact, they are certainly true Catholics; although in order to prove it, it may not be necessary to accuse others of deviation from the truth. It is enough

to clear ourselves of error, without charging it upon our neighbours.

. At the end of this letter there was the following passage in the first edition :

My revered Father, if you find difficulty in reading this letter on account of the badness of the type, you must take the blame to yourself. I am not indulged with such privileges as you. You have miraculous resources of this kind ; I cannot get sufficient to defend myself with. One has to seek in every direction for *printing-presses*. You would not yourself advise me to write any more under such difficulties ; for it is too hard to be reduced to the Osnabruck types.

LETTER.*

(SUPPLEMENTARY TO LETTER XVII.)

TO M. R. P. ANNAT, CONFESSOR TO THE KING, ON HIS
WORK, ENTITLED "THE GOOD FAITH OF THE JAN-
SENISTS," &c.

REVEREND FATHER.

Jan. 15, 1657.

I HAVE read attentively your work, entitled "The Good Faith of the Jansenists, &c." I observe therein that you continue in so firm and determined a manner to treat your opponents, viz. the members of the Port Royal, as heretics, that it would seem as if you had resolved that no doubt should any longer be entertained upon the question; and that you cover yourself with that accusation, as with a buckler, to repel all the attacks of the "Provincial Letters," which you suppose to be written by a member of the Port Royal. Whether he be so or not, I know not, my Reverend Father; but I would rather believe, that he is not such, on his own word, than that he is, on yours; seeing you are unable to furnish any

* This Letter, which is wanting in several editions, appears in that of 1779, at the beginning of the third volume, containing the papers attributed to Pascal. Although it is not improbable that Pascal had some hand in it, it is thought to be Nicole's; at least it is characterised by the manner of reasoning, the intelligence, and precision of that writer. (Fr. Editor.)

better evidence of the facts. As for me, I am undoubtedly neither inmate of Port Royal, nor secretary of their Society ; but I cannot help wishing to lay before you certain difficulties in respect to the character you assign to them, upon which if you satisfy me plainly and without equivocation, I will take my place by your side, and agree with you in regarding them as heretics.

You know, Reverend Sir, that merely to affirm people to be heretics is a very vague thing, and must be regarded as an ebullition of passion, rather than as truth ; provided no proof be furnished in what the heresy consists. The heretical propositions defended by them should be adduced, as well as the books in which they are defended and maintained as orthodox.

I ask you then, first of all, Reverend Fathers, what it is in which these Port Royal brethren are heretical ? Is it in that they do not receive the "Constitution," of Pope Innocent X. ; and do not condemn the five Propositions, which he has condemned ? If that be the case, then I also hold them to be heretical. But how am I to believe this of them, when they both say and write, in the plainest terms, that they receive this Constitution, and condemn these Propositions ?

Will you maintain that they receive it ostensibly, but in their hearts reject it ? I must entreat, Reverend Fathers, that you will not seek to carry your hostility into the very interior of their minds : you should be satisfied with the evidence of their words, and of their writings. Such conduct as this is most unjust ; and indicative of a strange and unchristian animosity. If tolerated, there lives not the person who could not be proved to be here-

tic, Mahomedan, or any thing you might please, by your simply giving out that they do not in their heart believe the mysteries of the Christian religion.

In what then are they heretics ? Because they will not acknowledge that these propositions are to be found in Jansenius ? I tell you, Reverend Father, that the mere fact whether certain condemned propositions be in a book, or not,—never was, and never can be, matter of heresy. For instance, any one affirming that the doctrine of “*Regret* for Sin,*” as set forth in the holy Council of Trent, is false and sinful, is heretical ; but for any one to doubt whether that censurable proposition be in Luther or Calvin, would be no heresy at all. In like manner, to maintain to be catholic the five propositions condemned by the Pope would be heretical ; but, the question whether they be in Jansenius or not, is not one of faith ; although it ought not to be made a cause of division or schism. Add to this, Father, that your opponents have declared, they should give themselves no concern whether these propositions are or are not in Jansenius ; and that, wherever they might be found, they equally condemn them. Where then, I ask again, is the heresy with which, with so much hardihood and pertinacity, you persist in charging them ?

Tell me not, I desire, that as the Pope and the Bishops assert these things to be in Jansenius, it is heresy to deny it. I maintain that the sin would be in denying it, unless conviction went along with such denial. I admit further, that it might even be schismatic to differ on such a point ; but it would be no heresy. Surely one who has

* ‘*Attrition.*’ (Fr.)

eyes to read, and cannot discover the things in question, may say, "I read them not there," without being branded as a heretic!

What will you next do, Reverend Sir, to support your charge? You will doubtless assert that M. Arnauld, in his Second Letter, has revived one of the five propositions. But who are they that say this? Some Doctors of the "Faculty," at variance upon the points in question with their fellows. And on what does the statement rest? Not on his words, for they are the words of St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine; but on a certain construction which they allege M. Arnauld puts upon them in his own mind, and which M. Arnauld denies. Now, I consider, mere charity demands that we give credit to the statement which an ecclesiastic or a doctor offers of sentiments concealed in the recesses of his mind, and which can be known only to his Maker. But, besides this, my Reverend Father, the faculty—not divided, but unanimously—have so often censured your authors, and your entire Society, that you have a strong interest in not being understood to regard as heretics all those whom they condemn.

I seek in vain then for the grounds on which these persons whom you call "Jansenists," are to be deemed heretical. Surely, Sir, if, according to the words of Jesus Christ, "to call our brethren Fools is to be in danger of hell-fire," to call them, without proof or cause, Heretics, is a greater crime, and exposes to severer punishment! No; these charges of yours—charges which rest on nothing but your own audacious assertion—are calculated only to astonish the ignorant, and frighten silly women!

But be assured, that men of spirit and intelligence will demand to be informed wherein the heresy consists?

What, Reverend Sir! Lessius is to be allowed to shelter his axioms under the authority of Victoria and Navarre; but Arnauld is to have no such indulgence, when he adduces the sentiments of St. Augustine, Chrysostom, Hilary, St. Thomas, and the whole of that school? Since when has the theology of antiquity become criminal? When, I ask, did the faith of our Fathers undergo a change?

You do your utmost to prove that the Fathers of the Port Royal have the character and spirit of heretics; but before you succeed in that, you must furnish proof that they are really such. This you are unable to do; and it shall be my business to show distinctly that they exhibit no mark or symbol of such a crime.

When the Church was engaged in controversy with the Arians, she charged them with denying the consubstantiality of the Son with the Eternal Father. Did the Arians deny that proposition? Did they declare that they admitted the equality and consubstantiality of the Father and the Son? Never did they do so, and therefore they were heretics. You accuse your adversaries of stating that "the observance of the precepts is impossible." They deny it. They declare it to be heresy to assert that proposition. They maintain that, neither before nor since the Pope's "Constitution," have they propounded any such axiom. They declare, with yourselves, that those are heretics who propound it. Then, they are no heretics.

When the Holy Fathers declared Nestorius to be heretical, because he denied the hypostatical union of the

Word with the purified humanity, and held that there were two persons in Christ, did the Nestorians of that time, or those who, in the Eastern world, have subsequently professed the doctrine, deny the tenets with which they were charged? Did they not say, "True, we admit two persons to be in Christ, but we maintain that this is no heresy." This was their language, and therefore they were pronounced heretical, and continue to be so to this day. But when you say, the Port Royal maintains that "we are unable to resist the influence of inward grace," they deny it; and, admitting, in common with you, its heretical nature, they avow their detestation of the proposition; while others, on the contrary, admit the proposition, and deny its heresy. Then are they not heretics.

When the Fathers condemned Eutychus, because he held that there is only *one* nature in Jesus Christ, did he deny it, and say he believed in two? Had he done so, he would not have been condemned; but he maintained that there was but one nature, and contended that therein was no heresy. On that account he was condemned. When you say, the Port Royal Fathers hold "that Jesus died not for the whole world, or for all men, but that his blood was shed only for the Elect," what is their reply? They declare that, on the contrary, they consider such a sentiment heretical; that they have never entertained it, and never will do so. They maintain it to be false that Christ shed his blood for the elect only, but that he poured it out even for the reprobate—for those who absolutely reject his grace. Finally, they hold that he died for all men, as St. Augustine believed, as St. Thomas

taught, and as the Council of Trent ordained. Now, my Reverend Father, is not this at least as good a plea, as that we believe like the Jesuits, and take our views from Molina? Then, again, they are no heretics.

When, in opposition to the Monothelites, it was contended that there were two kinds of will and two kinds of volition in Christ, did Cyril of Alexandria and Sergius of Constantinople allege that they were misrepresented? Did they declare that they admitted a double will—a double volition, in the person of our Lord? They did not: therefore were they pronounced heretics. When you charge upon the Port Royal that, in our present condition of a corrupt nature, “they do not exclude any necessity of action, whether meritorious or unworthy, excepting the necessity of constraint,”* they deny it, and maintain, on the contrary, that we have, in the present life, always a liberty of action for good or for evil; and *that*, even with the influence of “effectual grace,” which imposes upon us no necessity, although it infallibly leads to good conduct—as is held by all Thomists. Therefore they are not heretics.

Lastly, when the Church rebuked Luther and Calvin for denying the Sacraments and Transubstantiation, and for disobedience to the Pope, did those heretics complain of misrepresentation of their views and tenets? Did they not resolutely maintain those propositions, and do they not maintain them to this hour, and have been declared heretics for doing so? But when you tell the brethren of the Port Royal, “that they repudiate the

* ‘ Ils n'excluent et ne rejettent aucune nécessité de l'action méritoire ou démeritoire, sinon la nécessité de contrainte. ’ (Fr.)

Pope's authority, oppose the Council of Trent, &c." they adopt—and properly—the "*Mentiris impudentissime*;" that is, Reverend Father, they say it is false! For in matters of such importance as this it is allowable and even necessary to charge falsehood. Then are they not heretics; or if they be so, they exhibit nothing of the spirit and character of heresy. No such heresy has been ever heretofore seen in the Church; and far easier would it be to demonstrate on the part of their enemies, the features of calumny and imposition, than in themselves those of heresy.

I find, indeed, that heretics have frequently endeavoured to affix upon the truly Catholic the stigma of erroneous opinions. The Pelagians charged St. Augustine with a denial of free-will; the Eutychians asserted that the Catholic opposed the substantial union of the divinity and humanity in Christ: the Monothelites accused the true Church of raising a distinction and contrariety between the divine and human will in the Saviour; the Iconoclasts declared that we give to images the worship due only to God; the Lutherans and Calvinists call us "Popelitres," and give out that the Pope is Antichrist. We say, all these propositions are heretical, and we equally detest them all: therefore we are not heretics. But I fear, my Reverend Father, there may be more ground for charging you with a heretical taint, than for your imputations against your opponents, for you avow the "Molinëan" propositions with which they reproach you, but allege they are not heretical. Those opinions which you make matter of charge against them, they utterly deny, while they admit them to be in themselves heretical. Thus

they take the course which has always been pursued by true Catholics—you, Reverend Father, take that which as uniformly has been pursued by heretics.

But when you avail yourself of their piety, and their zeal in support of Christian morality, as proofs of heresy, you reach the climax of audacity! Had you succeeded in demonstrating their heretical propensities, it might have been allowable to brand them with hypocrisy and dissimulation; but that you should turn into an instrument for establishing your charge of heresy, their holy devotedness, their zeal for the discipline of the Church, and for the doctrines of the Fathers—this, Reverend Sir, is not to be endured, and assuredly we shall not be wanting in means to frustrate your base designs.

To hear the language you affect, it might be supposed, indeed, that all your purpose was accomplished—they are heretics—their heresy is as palpable as that of Luther and Calvin. But, my good Father, you must permit me, in a matter of such importance, to suspend my judgment, or in fact, utterly to disbelieve your assertion, till I find these men in open contumacy against the Pope, and distinctly maintaining the Propositions which he has condemned—aye, and in the very terms also in which they were condemned. For I ask you, Reverend Sir, should these holy men prove to be no heretics—as I verily believe to be the fact—would you be able to justify me before God for admitting them to be such? And all those other persons also, who, on your authority have believed in their heresy, and universally circulated the reproach of their heresy—tell me, will it be sufficient for their exculpation before the

tribunal of the Sovereign Judge, to plead that they adopted the charge from your publications ?

I have now done ; for, as to the details of your fallacies, and misrepresentations, I leave you to the author of the " Letters." He has already effectually discomfited your associates, who thought to overwhelm him with similar reproaches ; and he will not spare you ; unless he should deem it, after all, unnecessary to make any reply ; seeing you have brought forward nothing of importance which had not been said before by your brethren. All these things have been completely disposed of by the author ; for your present production, which you state has been composed within these four months, is an *old* work : you say not a word of the 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15th Letters, all which appeared before the date of your publication, although you undertake in the Preface to " convict of bad faith the Letters written since Easter." What is to be said of a book, whose impostures begin even with the *title-page* !

LETTER XVIII.

ADDRESSED TO R. P. ANNAT, JESUIT.

SHOWING STILL MORE INCONTROVERTIBLY, AND EVEN FROM THE PERE ANNAT'S OWN ANSWER, THAT NO HERESY EXISTS IN THE CHURCH; THAT EVERY ONE CONDEMNS THE DOCTRINE UNJUSTLY ALLEGED BY THE JESUITS TO BE FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF JANSENIUS; AND CONSEQUENTLY ALL THE FAITHFUL ARE AGREED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FIVE PROPOSITIONS. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MATTERS OF BELIEF AND OF FACT, AND THAT IN THE LATTER WE SHOULD RELY RATHER ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE SENSES THAN ON HUMAN AUTHORITY.

REVEREND FATHER,

March 24, 1657.

You have long been labouring at the task of attaching the reproach of error to your adversaries; but I believe you will at last be brought to the acknowledgment that nothing is so difficult as to prove those to be heretical who, not only are not such, but who would dread nothing so much as the being such in reality. I proved in my last Letter how sedulously you had, one after another, imputed heresies to them, without being able in a single instance to establish the charge: so that nothing re-

mained for you but to accuse them of refusing to condemn Jansenius, yet without any explanation of the ground on which their censure should rest. You must have been indeed reduced to extremity for matter of crimination; for who ever before heard of a heresy which should not be susceptible of explanation? Their reply was therefore sufficiently easy, being simply, that if Jansenius was not in error it was unjust to condemn him; if he was, then the errors should have been explained, that it might be known on what ground he was to be condemned. This, however, you have not thought fit to do; but you have endeavoured to strengthen your own denunciations by alleging certain decrees, which proved nothing, inasmuch as they in no degree expounded the meaning of Jansenius in regard to the five Propositions.

Now this was not the proper way to settle the controversy. Had you been mutually agreed as to the true interpretation of Jansenius, and had the only question between you been, whether his sentiments so interpreted were heretical or not, then the decisions as to their innocent tendency might have been relevant. But the main dispute being as to his actual meaning—the one party affirming that they could see in his sentiments only those of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and the other that they perceived in them heresy, yet without explaining in what such heresy consists—it is clear that an ordonnance which declares nothing respecting this difference, and only condemns in general terms the sentiments of Jansenius without explanation, decides nothing as to the real points in dispute.

Therefore it is that you have been told a hundred times,

that, the controversy being alone on this point, you could determine nothing without a declaration of your own understanding in respect of the meaning of Jansenius. But, as you always pertinaciously declined this, I resolved to press you upon this point in my last letter; in which I set forth that it was not without an occult design that you aimed at procuring a censure of his views, without an explanation; and that your object was that, hereafter, this undefined condemnation should fall upon the doctrine of *effectual grace* itself, by showing that *it* and *Jansenius* were identical—a thing which you would not find difficult to accomplish. This has unavoidably drawn from you a reply; for had you, after that, obstinately refused an explanation, it would have been obvious to the simplest understanding that your designs were directed only against this sacred doctrine; and you would herein have exposed yourselves to irretrievable disgrace, and the reprobation of the universal Church, united together for its defence.

You have now, therefore, been compelled openly to explain yourselves in your reply to my Letter; in which I advanced the proposition, “that if Jansenius had put any other construction upon the five Propositions than such as was consistent with the doctrine of effectual grace, there was no excuse to be made for him; but if he had put upon them no other than this construction—then he was guilty of no error.” This, my Father, is a position which you could not gainsay; but I find you taking a distinction of this nature, p. 21; “It is not sufficient,” you say, “for the justification of Jansenius, to say that he holds the doctrine of effectual grace; for that dogma

may be held in two ways;—the one heretical, after Calvin, which consists in saying that the will, when under the influence of grace, has not power to resist it; the other, orthodox, according to the Thomists and the Sorbonne, and founded on principles established by the Councils—which is, that effectual grace, by its nature, operates in such a manner on the will, as that there is always in man the power to resist its influences.”

All this, Reverend Father, may be conceded to you: you conclude, however, by saying, “that Jansenius would be orthodox, if he defended the doctrine of grace in the manner of the Thomists; but that he is heretical, because he opposes the Thomists, and agrees with Calvin, who denies in man a power of resistance to grace.” I do not pause here, to inquire into the fact assumed; viz. whether Jansenius be, in reality, in agreement with Calvin. It is sufficient that you assume it; and that you now assert openly, that by the statements of Jansenius you intend only those of Calvin. Is not that, Reverend Sir, what you really intended? Is it not the error of Calvin alone that you meant to condemn, under the name of Jansenius? Why not have avowed this before? You would have saved much trouble; for all the world would have agreed in condemning this error with you, without the authority of briefs or bulls. Truly this explanation was not a little necessary, and obviates much difficulty. We did not know before what errors they were that the Popes and Bishops sought to put down, under the name of Jansenius. The whole Church was bewildered, and no one could supply an explanation. You, Sir, at length have done this—you, whom their entire party consider

their head and the prime mover of their counsels; and who are acquainted with all the secrets of their polity. You have now told us that the condemnation in Council of Jansenius is no other than the condemnation of Calvin. Our doubts are at length resolved. We now know that the error which was intended to be condemned under cover of the sentiments of Jansenius, is alone the doctrine of Calvin; and thus we are showing our dutiful obedience to the decrees of the Church, in condemning, with them, sentiments upon which they have placed their ban. We are no longer surprised at the zeal of the Popes and certain of the Bishops against Jansenius. How could it have been otherwise, I pray, if credit was to be given to those who publicly announced that his opinions were identical with those of Calvin?

Let me then take upon myself to declare to you, my Father, that you have now no further ground of censure of your opponents, for you and they are agreed in the object of your reprehension. I am only surprised that you should be ignorant of the facts; and should have so little knowledge of their sentiments on a subject upon which their writings left no room for doubt. Be assured that, had you been better informed, you would regret not to have, in an amicable spirit, made yourself acquainted with a system of doctrines so pure and so catholic, but which passion urges you now, in mere ignorance, to oppose. You would find, Reverend Sir, that not only do they hold, that resistance may be effectually made to those feeble graces which are styled "existing or ineffectual,"* but

* 'Excitantes ou inefficaces.' (Fr.)

that they firmly maintain, in opposition to Calvin, the power inherent in the will to resist even effectual and conquering grace; as also that they defend—(but in opposition to *Molina*)—the power of that grace over the will; so jealous are they in the support alike of all these great truths. Too well do they know that man, in his own nature, has always the power to fall into sin, and to offer resistance to grace; and that, since his fall, he has borne about with him a fatal body of concupiscence, which infinitely aggravates this evil tendency; but that, nevertheless, when it pleases God in his mercy to touch the heart, he influences it to do such things, and in such manner, as please him, although the irresistibleness of the Divine power does not in any degree infringe upon the natural liberty of the human will. Such are the admirable and mysterious methods by which God carries on his operations, as St. Augustine has beautifully unfolded! It is in this way that are dissipated all those imaginary contradictions which the enemies of the doctrines of grace conjure up, between its sovereignty over the will, and the power of the will for the resistance of grace. For, according to the same holy authority (whom the heads of the Church have constituted her guide upon this subject), Jehovah effects his changes in the heart of man by the diffusion of a divine and gracious influence; which, overcoming the evil propensities of the flesh, opens up to the man, on the one hand, a view of his own mortality and nothingness, and, on the other, the greatness and eternity of God; and thus produces in him a disgust for the pleasures of sin, which tend to separate him from the great source of unchangeable good. Finding, then, his most

sacred delights to arise from communion with God, he is urged towards him by a free, an ardent, and an affectionate impulse, which it would be an infliction and punishment to him to resist. Not that man has not the power to separate himself from God, if he be conscious of the inclination. But how can he incline to do so, when his will is even subservient to his pleasure; and his chief pleasure is now centered in Him, who is the alone source of real good, and who comprehends all other good in Himself? "*Quod enim amplius non delectat, secundum id operemur necesse est,*" as saith St. Augustine, *Exp. Ep. ad Gal. n. 49.*

It is in this manner that God disposes the will of man, without any irresistible constraint; and that his will—which possesses always the power, although not always the inclination, to resist the Divine grace—tends freely, but infallibly, towards God, when placed within the influence of his sweet and powerful inspirations.*

These, Reverend Father, are the holy principles of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. According to them, it is true "that grace may be resisted," in opposition to Calvin's opinion; and therefore Pope Clement says, in his Congregational Rescripts, *de Auxiliis*, art. 5 and 6, "God excites in us the motions of our will, and disposes our hearts, by the sway which his supreme Majesty exercises over the will of man, no less than over the inhabitants of heaven, as saith St. Augustine."

* The reader will here again, perhaps, notice a confirmation of a remark in the *Memoir*, that Pascal, while vehemently controverting some of the extreme positions of Calvin and Luther upon the doctrines of Grace in their general scope and spirit, approximated more closely than he supposed to the views of those great men. (Transl.)

On these principles it is that our actions emanate from ourselves; our good works—(contrary again to Calvin's views)—are our own; yet, God being the first cause of our actions, and “working in us according to his pleasure,” according to St. Paul, “our good works are the gifts of God,” as saith the Council of Trent.

In this way is overthrown the impious * sentiment of Luther, censured by the same Council, “that we co-operate not in any measure in our own salvation, any more than the inanimate creatures:” and thus also is equally exposed the impiety of Molina's school, which denies even that it is the power of grace which causes us to co-operate in the work of our salvation; a doctrine by which is subverted that principle of faith established by St. Paul, that “it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do.”

And it is by this method also that all those passages of Holy Writ, which seem the most opposed, are brought into a sacred harmony: “Turn you unto the Lord:” “Lord, turn thou us.” “Cast away your iniquities from you.” “It is the Lord who taketh away the iniquities of his people.” “Do works meet for repentance:” “Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us.” “Make you a new heart and a new spirit:” “I will give you a new heart, and create a right spirit within you.”

The only true way to reconcile these apparent anomalies, which seem to attribute our good works, now to God, and now to ourselves, is to acknowledge, with St. Augustine, “our actions are our own, because of the free will

* Vide Memoir.

which produces them ; but they are also of God, on account of his grace which influences our will to produce them." And because, as he says elsewhere, God causes us to do what pleases him, in causing us to incline to do that to which otherwise we could not be inclined : "a Deo factum est ut vellent quod nolle potuissent."

Thus, my Father, it is clear that your opponents are perfectly in agreement even with the modern Thomists themselves ; for they hold, equally with them, both the power of resistance to grace, and the irresistibility of the effects of grace ; regarding both these as cardinal points of doctrine. This, Alvarez,* one of their most distinguished members, frequently reiterates in his work, and explains in these terms, Disp. 72, B. 8. n. 4 ; "When grace operates upon the will, the latter infallibly acquiesces ; for the effect of grace is such, that although there is power in the will to resist, it in reality never does resist." For this he assigns the following reason from his master, St. Thomas, 1, 2, q. 112, N. 3 ; "The will of God cannot fail of its accomplishment ; thus, when it is his will that a man should yield to grace, he does so yield infallibly, and even necessarily ; not, however, by an absolute necessity, but by a necessity of infallibility." In which, grace does not infringe upon "the power a man possesses to resist, if he choose ;" because it only influ-

* Diego (or Didacus) Alvarez was one of the most eminent theologians among the Dominicans ; he lived in the 16-17th century, and died in 1635. He was brought from Spain to Rome in 1596, to maintain, with Père Lemos, the doctrine of Grace, which had been weakened and almost overthrown by the Jesuit Molina. He distinguished himself highly in the famous congregation 'De Auxiliis.' The work of Alvarez, above referred to, is entitled 'Didaci Alvarez de auxiliis divinæ gratiæ, et humani arbitrii viribus et libertate, &c., &c.' (Note Edit. 1812.)

ences him in such way, that he does not incline to resistance; as your Père Pétiau states in these words, Vol. 1, Theol. Dogm. B. 9, c. 7, p. 602; "The grace of Christ causes us to persevere in an unfailing course of piety, although not by any necessity; for the will is capable of resisting its influences, according to the Councils; but the same grace produces an incapability of such resistance." *

This, Reverend Sir, is the uniform doctrine of St. Augustine, St. Prosper, the Fathers who succeeded to them, the Councils, St. Thomas, and the whole of the Thomists. It is also the doctrine of those very men whom you are opposing, little as you thought it to be so. And lastly, it is that which you yourself have recently sanctioned, in the following terms; "The doctrine of effectual grace, in which is recognized a power of resistance to its influences, is orthodox, confirmed by Councils, and maintained by the Thomists and the Sorbonne." Be candid, my good Father; had you been aware that your adversaries really held this doctrine, a regard for the interests of your own Society might have perhaps withheld you from this public testimony to its truth; but,—believing that they were opposed to it,—that very motive of interest has led you to authorise sentiments which you fancied were opposed to theirs; and, expecting by your stigmas to bring their principles into obloquy, you have in reality achieved their entire establishment. In this way it is that, by a species of prodigy, we at this moment see the defenders of the doctrines of grace countenanced by

* ' Car on peut n'y pas consentir, si on le veut, comme dit le conseil; mais cette même grace fait que l'on ne peut pas.' (Fr.)

the partizans of Molina : such is the beautiful process by which God causes all things to work together for his glory and his truth !

Let it then henceforth be known to the whole world,—and that by your own express declaration,—that this sacred truth, the doctrine of effectual grace—a truth so needful for every holy action—so cherished by the Church, and the costly purchase of her Saviour's blood—that this truth is so essentially catholic, that there lives not a member of the Church—not even the *Jesuit* himself—who does not acknowledge its orthodoxy ! And at the same time it will be known—and that also by your own acknowledgment—that there is not a shadow of error in the views of those whom you have so grossly maligned. When your charges against them were mysterious and undefined, it was as difficult for them to defend as it was easy for you to accuse ; but now that you openly declare the errors you are combatting to be those of Calvin, which you suppose them to have espoused, it is manifest to all that they are wholly free from heterodoxy ; inasmuch as they have, in their writings, in discourse, and by every means in their power, testified their unqualified opposition to those errors ; and *that* in an equal degree with the Thomists, whom you have no scruple in recognising to be orthodox ; and who indeed have never by any one been suspected of being otherwise.

What then, Reverend Sir, becomes of your accusations against them ? Are they, while repudiating this doctrine of Calvin, to be regarded as heretical, because they will not admit the doctrine of Jansenius to be that of Calvin ? Would you now dare to assert that this is a matter of

heresy? will you not rather allow it to be a mere question of fact, with which heresy can have no concern? If it be heresy to affirm that man cannot resist the influences of grace, is it equally such to doubt, that Jansenius maintains the opinion? Is this a truth of revelation? Is this an article of faith, which must be received on pain of damnation? In spite of all your efforts; what is it in reality but a simple question of fact, which to turn into heresy, is to make utterly ridiculous?

Give it then no longer, my good Father, this name, but any other you please, that shall suit the nature of your controversy. Say they are ignorant—obtuse; that they do not understand Jansenius: these would be invectives in character with your style of discussion; but to charge them with heresy is not so. And as that is the only reproach which I have any anxiety to avert from them, I shall give myself no trouble to demonstrate that they *do* understand Jansenius aright. All I shall say is, that, judging by your own rules, it does appear to me difficult to maintain them not to be orthodox; for this is the way in which you proceed to investigate the matter.

“To prove,” you say, “whether Jansenius is in error or not, it must be ascertained whether he defends the doctrine of ‘effectual grace,’ after the manner of Calvin, who denies the existence of any power to resist it; for then he would be heretical; or after the manner of the Thomists, who admit it; then he would be catholic.”

See then, for yourself, Sir, whether he holds an inability to resist the influence of grace, when he declares throughout several entire treatises, and among others, in Vol. 3, B. 8, ch. 20, “We have always, according to the Council,

a power to resist grace. The free-will of man has always an ability, *either to act, or not to act*; to will, or not to will; to consent, or not to consent; to do good, or to do evil; and man has even in this life these two species of liberty, which you call contrariety and contradiction.* Say, again, whether it be not to oppose Calvin, according to your own representation of his opinions, to maintain, as does Jansenius, throughout his 21st chapter, "that the Church has condemned the heresy, that effectual grace does not operate upon the will, in the manner which has been so long received in the Church, to the effect that it is in the power of the will to consent or not; whereas, according to St. Augustine and the Council, the will has always the power to withhold consent, if disposed to do so; and, according to St. Prosper, God bestows even upon his elect, the inclination to persevere, although he does not take from them power to do the contrary." And, lastly, judge whether he does not agree with the Thomists, when you find him declaring, c. 4, "all that which the latter have written to harmonize the efficaciousness of grace with the power of resistance to it, is so in accordance with his views, that it is sufficient to peruse their works to be acquainted with his sentiments. "Quid ipsi dixerunt dictum puta."

You see then how he—more emphatically than all the leading theologians—expresses himself upon this head; thus evincing that he disagrees with Calvin, and is equally orthodox with yourselves. But if you are in possession of a method of ascertaining the meaning of an author

* 'Que vous appelez de contrariet  , et de contradiction.' (Fr.)

otherwise than by his own words, and are able, not only without quotations from himself, but in contradiction to his very expressions, to maintain that he denies the resistance of the will, and “supports Calvin in opposition to the Thomists”—if you can do all this, you need, nevertheless, have no fear, that I shall accuse you of heresy: all I shall say is, simply, that you ill understand Jansenius: but we may both be, notwithstanding, very good members of the Catholic Church!

Why is it then, Sir, that you are so carried away by acrimony and passion in this controversy; and treat as your bitterest enemies, and as the most dangerous of heretics, those whom you can convict of no error, except that they do not read Jansenius in the same way as yourself? About what is it that you are disputing, but the meaning of the writer? You ask for his followers’ condemnation; but they ask you his meaning. You say it is Calvin’s heresy: they reply, they condemn it equally with yourself; and therefore, if you would have the candour to look beyond the mere words to the things signified, you ought to be satisfied. If censure be withheld from Jansenius, it is because it is feared that it must embrace St. Thomas also. Thus, between you, words themselves become equivocal in their meaning. On your part they signify Calvin—on his, St. Thomas; so that, your different ideas of the same expressions being the cause of such dissension, were I the arbiter of the controversy, I should interdict the naming of Jansenius, both on the one side and on the other. And thus, taking only your understanding of the matter, it would be found that you aimed only at procuring the condemnation of Calvin, in which

they would support you ; and that they endeavour alone to defend the opinions of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, with which you profess cordially to agree.

As for myself, I hesitate not to say, I shall still regard them as orthodox, whether they condemn Jansenius, in the belief that he is in error, or whether they acquit him, finding in his opinions nothing but what you esteem to be catholic ; and shall address them as St. Jerome addressed John, Bishop of Jerusalem, when accused of holding the eight Propositions of Origen : “ Either condemn Origen,” he said, “ provided you believe he entertained these errors, or deny that he does entertain them,—‘ *Aut nega hoc dixisse eum qui arguitur ; aut si locutus est talia, eum damna qui dixerit.*’ ”

This, Reverend Father, is the conduct of those who desire to censure errors, but not persons ; while you, who have more hostility to persons than to errors, care little for the heterodoxy of your opponents, provided you can succeed in procuring them personal condemnation. You urge your proceedings with vehemence ; but you will not succeed. I have told you before, and I now repeat it—violence can never prevail over truth ! Never were your accusations more clamorous ; never was the innocence of your adversaries more apparent ! Never was the doctrine of Grace more subtilly attacked ; and never was it seen to be more irresistibly established ! Your utmost efforts are exerted to cause it to be believed that your disputes are upon questions of faith ; and the more evident does it become that they relate to the simplest matters of fact. You labour incessantly to induce a belief of your facts ; and yet the more universally are those facts doubted.

And the reason is plain—it is, that you have no inclination to resort to the most obvious method of proving a matter of fact, that of convincing the senses—of showing in the *book* itself the very words which you assert to be contained in it.

No ! your indisposition to this simple procedure, must strike the most obtuse. Why do you not adopt the course that *I* have uniformly pursued in my Letters, that of accurately marking—page—chapter—volume—the places in your publications from which my quotations are taken ? This is what has been done by the ecclesiastics of Paris ; and this is a method which never fails in convincing the public. But what would you have said—what would you have thought—when, for instance, such a proposition as that of Père Launy's was brought forward against you, viz. ; “ That an ecclesiastic may take the life of any one that threatens the publication of calumnies against him, or against his community, provided he has no other way of defending himself,”—what, I ask, would have been said, if these expressions had not been quoted from the context in actual terms ; if every demand to point out the place whence the passage was taken, had been obstinately resisted ; and, on the contrary, a mere application had been made to Rome for a *Bull*, directing that the fidelity of the quotation should be recognized ? Would it not have been believed that his Holiness had been taken by surprise ; and that so extraordinary a procedure would not have been resorted to, had not the more simple methods failed, which truth and reality furnish to all who rely upon their aid ? On the other hand all that was necessary was to state that Père Launy laid down the

proposition in question at t. 5, disp. 36, N. 118, p. 544, Edition of Douay—then, every one might see the very words for themselves, and every doubt would be dissipated. This, when we have *right* on our side, is the prompt and easy way to set at rest effectually matters of pure fact.

Why then, Sir, have you not adopted this method? You have asserted in your ‘Cavilli,’ “that the five Propositions are contained in the writings of Jansenius, word for word, and in their own precise terms—‘*iisdem verbis.*” This is denied. What was your conduct thereon? Did you quote the page in which you had seen them with your own eyes, or did you at once confess that you had been deceived? You did neither the one nor the other. But, perceiving that none of the passages of Jansenius which you adduced to deceive the world, were actually “the condemned Propositions, literally and specifically,” which you had engaged to produce from his works, you present us with the “Constitutions,” which it is pretended are extracted from them, although without indicating from what parts they are taken.

I well know, my Father, the reverence due from Christians to the Holy See; and your opponents are not backward in showing the same disposition towards her also. But deem it not to be any irreverence to his Holiness, that they should have represented (with all the submission of children to a parent, and of members to their Head) that he *may* have been surprised into error upon this question of fact; that he had instituted no examination into it during his Pontificate; and that his predecessor, Innocent X., had only caused an investigation to be made

whether the Propositions were heretical, but not whether they were to be found in Jansenius. This it was that induced the representation that was made to the commissary of the Holy See, one of the principal examiners, "that they could not be censured, as being the sentiments of any author, in particular: "non sunt *qualificabiles* in sensu proferentis:" because they had been presented to them for examination on their own merits, and without reference to any author from whom they proceeded—"in *abstracto*, et ut præscindunt ab omni proferente." This may be seen in the lately published account of their proceedings; where also it appears, that above sixty doctors and a large number of able and pious persons had carefully read the work, without perceiving the matter in question; but, on the contrary could find nothing of the kind; that those who conveyed the impression to the Pope seemed to have abused the confidence his Holiness reposed in them, being vitally interested in crying down an author who had convicted Molina of above fifty errors; * that what renders this the more probable is, that they hold, as one of the most authentic maxims of their theological system, "that they may *lawfully* calumniate those by whom they believe themselves unjustly attacked;" and that thus, their testimony being so suspicious, and the

* This is stated to have been the origin of the aversion of the Jesuits to Jansenius. When his "*Augustinus*" was published in 1640, Libertus Fromond, a celebrated Professor of Louvaine, recommended to annex to the work of his friend, who had then been dead two years, a parallel of the Jesuits' doctrines of Grace with the errors of the Marseillais, or semi-Pelagians. The Jesuits, who erroneously supposed Jansenius to be the author of this parallel, immediately began, even in the Low Countries, to denounce the work in a large number of theological treatises, which are now very curious and scarce—folio, 1641. (Ed. 1812.)

counter-evidence of others so important, they felt justified in entreating the Pope with all humility, to institute an investigation into this fact in the presence of the learned Professors on both sides of the question, in order to come to a regular and solemn decision. "Let them assemble able arbitrators" said St. Basil on a similar occasion, ep. 75: "Let them be chosen without bias; let them examine my writings, and see if there be any violations of the truth; let them then read the objections and the replies, and thus come to a decision on mature grounds and in due form; one not hasty, partial, or superficial."

Think not then, Sir, to represent as wanting in deference to the Holy See, persons who act in this manner. The Papacy itself is little disposed to exercise over its adherents that imperious authority, and those arbitrary pretensions which some would put forward in its name. "The Church," says St. Gregory, in Job B. 8, Ch. 1., "which has been bred in the school of humility, commands not with authority, but appeals to the reason of such of her children as she believes to be in error: '*recta quæ errantibus dicit, non quasi ex auctoritate præcipit, sed ex ratione persuadet.*'" And, far from feeling it to be derogatory to rectify an erroneous judgment into which she may have been surprised, she glories, on the contrary, in doing so, as St. Bernard testifies, Ep. 180: "The Apostolical See," he says, has this distinguished merit, that it stands not upon false scruples, but willingly revokes any error into which it may have been drawn by surprise; therefore no one can avail himself of its aid in any unjust procedure.

This is the true aspect under which to view the Papacy;

for all theologians are agreed that the Holy See is liable to surprises of this kind. And so far is the supremacy of its position from affording a security against them, that the multifarious range of its superintendence tends rather to render it liable to them. This again is what was stated by St. Gregory himself, in reply to those who expressed astonishment that a Pope should have had a deception practised upon him. "Why are you surprised," he said, Book 1, Ch. 4, Dial :—"That we should be deceived—we who are but *men* like yourselves? Know you not that David—a Sovereign endued with the spirit of prophecy—lending too ready an ear to the impostures of Ziba, gave an unjust judgment against the son of Jonathan? Who then can think it strange that we, who are no prophet, should be sometimes surprised into error by impositions? We are oppressed by the multitude of affairs; and our mind, dissipated in the variety of objects that solicit attention, can often give very insufficient consideration to each individually, and may be thus led into mistake.

Now truly, my good Father, I should think the Popes themselves must know better than you whether they are liable to error or not. They tell us that the most exalted rulers, ecclesiastical and civil, are more exposed to deception, than even those of inferior station. This indeed may be well believed; and equally easy is it to comprehend by what means the fraud is accomplished. St. Bernard gives a description of them in a letter addressed to Innocent II., in these energetic terms, Ep. 327: "It is no new or surprising thing to find the mind of man addicted both to deceive and to be deceived. Certain ecclesiastics have gained access to you in a spirit of illusion and

falsehood. They filled your ear with disparagements of a bishop, of exemplary life, but who had become an object of their hatred. Like dogs ravening their prey, they turn his good deeds into evil. Your displeasure, 'most holy Father, was excited against your faithful son. Oh! why did you thus give cause of triumph to his adversaries? 'Believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they be of God!' Let me trust, that when the truth shall become apparent to your mind, all your erroneous impressions will be removed. I pray the Spirit of Truth to give you his grace to separate the light from darkness, to rebuke the evil and to justify the good!"

You see then, Reverend Sir, that the eminence of the Holy See does not avail to exempt its occupants from surprises into error, but, from their weight and importance, renders such errors only the more dangerous. This consideration is again represented by St. Bernard to the Pope Eugenius—"de Consid. B. 2, C. ult." "There is another defect so general, that I have known few persons of eminence exempt from it. It is, Holy Father, that excessive credulity, the source of so many evils! Thence arise furious persecutions of innocence, unjust prejudices against the absent, and storms of passion about the merest trifles—'*pro nihilo*.' This, holy Father, is an universal evil, from which if you be exempt, I must say that you enjoy an advantage unshared by any of your brethren."

I should hope, my Father, that you are beginning now to perceive that Popes, like other men, may be surprised into mistakes. But, more thoroughly to convince you of this, I would only recal to your recollection some ex-

amples, reported in your *own* work, of both Popes and Emperors who have in this manner been signally deceived. You state that Apollinarius led into error the Pope Damasus, and that Celestius entrapped Zozimus by misrepresentations: you say also that one Athanasius deceived the Emperor Heraclius, and instigated him to a persecution of the Catholics; and lastly, that Sergius prevailed with Honorius to obtain from him that decree which was burnt by the Sixth Council; “by means, as you state, “of plying successfully the office of an assiduous *Valet* about the Pope’s person.”

It is therefore established by your own testimony, that instances are not wanting of persons who thus surround these great Potentates, urging them by unworthy artifices to persecutions of the defenders of the truth; while they believe that they are only opposing mischievous heresies. Thence it arose that the Holy See, which dreads nothing more than such surprises, constituted a certain letter of Alexander III into an ecclesiastical law, and inserted it in the canonical code, - to the effect of suspending the execution of bulls and decrees, when there might be reason to suppose deception to have been practised in securing them. “If it should happen” (writes this Pope to the Archbishop of Ravenna, C. v. Ex. de Rescrip.) “that we should issue to your brethren certain decrees which do violence to your principles, do not let this cause you any disquiet. For you have only, either to execute them reverently, or to furnish us with reasons for not doing so, seeing we shall not disapprove of your withholding obedience to orders which may prove to have been obtained from us by surprise or artifice.” This is the

way in which Pontiffs have acted, whose only desire was to assuage the differences of Christians, and not to follow the passionate views of those who would cause trouble in the Church. They affect not mere domination over men's spirits, as saith St. Peter and St. Paul, following herein the sentiments of Jesus Christ. The spirit which breathes through their proceedings is that only of peace and truth. This leads them to subjoin to all their ordinances the clause, "*Si ita est; si preces veritate nitantur:*" "if the matter be as represented to us; if duly borne out by the facts." Whence it follows, that since the Popes only allow efficiency to their bulls, as far as they may be in accordance with truth and fact, the bulls in themselves are not evidence of that truth and fact, but on the contrary it is the truth and the fact that give validity to the bulls.

How then are we to attain to certainty as to matters of fact? It is the sense—the eye, which herein is the proper judge; in the same way that reason is the judge of things intellectual, and faith of such as are supernatural and revealed. For (since you oblige me to continue the discussion) I must tell you that according to the views of two of the greatest authorities of the Church—St. Augustine and St. Thomas—those three sources of our intelligence, sense, reason, and faith, have each their separate objects, and their assigned limits. And, as God has seen fit to use the medium of the senses for the entrance of faith—'*fides ex auditu*'—just as faith would destroy the certitude of the senses, so faith would itself be destroyed by bringing into doubt the faithful testimony of sense. On this account, St. Thomas remarks that God

has seen fit that the sensible accidents* should subsist in the Eucharist, in order that the senses, which can judge only of these accidents, may not be deceived—‘ut sensus à deceptione redderentur immunes.’

We ought hence to conclude that, whatever be the proposition presented for our examination, we should first satisfy ourselves as to its nature, in order to ascertain to which of these three principles it should be referred. If it relate to any thing supernatural, it should be weighed, not by sense or reason, but by Scripture and the decisions of the Church. If it be not matter of revelation, but within the limit of human reason, then reason may lawfully be its judge. And, lastly, if it be a question of fact, then sense, within whose province it lies, will be its most competent arbiter.

This rule is so general, that according to St. Augustine and St. Thomas, whenever Holy Writ presents to us a passage whose primary and literal meaning appears opposed to what sense or reason recognize, *with certainty*, we must not endeavour to disavow this contradiction, in order to subject it to the authority of this apparent sense of Scripture; but, in our interpretation of Scripture, we must seek for another meaning which shall be in agreement with the *sensible* truth; because, the Word of God being infallible even as to facts, and the evidence of the senses and of reason being in its full extent positive also, these two species of truth must ever harmonize. Then, as Scripture admits of different modes of interpretation, while, on the other hand, the evidence of the senses is

* ‘Les accidents sensibles.’ (Fr.)

uniform, we ought, upon such points, to receive as the true interpretation of Scripture that which is in accordance with the faithful testimony of the senses. "We must," says St. Thomas, 1st Part, q. 68, a. 1, "according to St. Augustine, observe two things; the one, that Scripture has ever a true meaning; the other that, as it admits of more than one interpretation, when any interpretation is assigned to it which reason clearly ascertains to be untrue, we ought not to persist in maintaining such to be the natural meaning, but seek for another which shall be in accordance with it."

This he illustrates by the instance of that passage in Genesis, in which it is said, "God created two great lights, the sun and the moon, the stars also." Herein Scripture would seem to imply that the moon is greater than the stars; but, as it is certain by indubitable proofs that the fact is otherwise, we ought "not," says this great writer, "obstinately to defend this literal interpretation, but seek for another in conformity with the fact of the matter," such as "that the term 'great light' denotes only the magnitude of the moon's lustre in its appearance to our eyes, and not the *positive* magnitude of its orb." * If this method were not pursued, the effect would be, not to enhance men's reverence for the Holy Scriptures, but rather to lay them open to the cavils of the infidel; "for," as St. Augustine remarks, 'de Gen. ad. Lit. 1, C. 19,' "when he perceives that we receive, on the authority of

* The command of Joshua to the Sun to *stand still*, is another and obvious instance of the same kind. It will, however, be quite evident to all who are acquainted with Pascal's writings, and with his implicit reception of scriptural truth, that from the propositions laid down in the preceding paragraphs, all revelations of a *miraculous* kind are strictly excluded. (Transl.)

Scripture, facts which he knows to be untrue, he smiles at our credulity in regard to other questions of a more recondite nature, such as the Resurrection of the dead, and everlasting Life." "Thus," adds St. Thomas, "we should render our religion contemptible in the eyes of the prejudiced, and increase their aversion to its truths."

In the same way, Sir, you would shut the door against heretics, and render the authority of the Papacy despicable in their esteem, were you to refuse to regard as catholic those who will not admit certain passages to be in a publication, which they themselves are unable to find in it, merely because a Pope has been surprised into a declaration that they are to be found there. It is only the personal examination of the book that can produce conviction upon such a point. Questions of fact are only to be determined by the senses. If what you assert be true, prove it to be so; if it be not, you labour in vain to induce belief. All the authority in the world cannot enforce or alter belief as to facts; nothing can possibly have power to cause that not to be which actually *is*.

It was in vain, for example, that certain monks of Ratisbon obtained from Pope St. Léo IX. a solemn decree, by which he declared that the body of St. Denis, first Bishop of Paris, who was commonly believed to be an Areopagite, had been removed from France, and transported to the church of their monastery. This had no effect in invalidating the fact, that the body of the Saint remained, and is to this day, in the celebrated abbey which bears his name; although the Pope states that he had investigated the circumstance with all the diligence pos-

sible—‘diligentissimè,’ and assisted by the advice of many bishops and prelates of the church; for which reason he strictly enjoins all Frenchmen—‘districtè præcipientes’—to acknowledge that we no longer possess these holy relics.” Notwithstanding which, the French, who well know the contrary of all this by the evidence of their own eyes, and, having had the shrine opened, found (according to the testimony of all the chronicles of the day) the relics in entire preservation, believed then, and continue to do so to the present day, the direct reverse of what his Holiness enjoined upon them; knowing well that saints and prophets are, like other men, liable to surprisals into error.

On the same principles, it was in vain that you succeeded in procuring from Rome a decree against Galileo; condemning his theory of the earth’s motion. This has been of no avail in proving that she is stationary; and if our own observations have convinced us that it is she that revolves in the system, all the men in the world will not prevent her from so revolving, or prevent them from revolving with her. Can you imagine, also, that the letters of excommunication of Pope Zachary against St. Virgile for maintaining the existence of our *Antipodes*, have had the effect of annihilating this new World; and that although this opinion was thus declared to be a dangerous error, the Spanish monarch would not have preferred taking the word of Christopher Columbus for its existence (who had returned from it,) rather than the opinion of the Pope who had not been there; while the Church derived incalculable advantages from the discovery, in conveying the knowledge of the Gospel to

multitudes, who would otherwise have perished in their infidelity !

You see then, in these instances, what is the nature of testimony from facts, and the principles by which they are to be judged. Hence (to return to our proper subject) it is easy to understand that, if the Propositions in question are actually not contained in the writings of Jansenius, they cannot by possibility have been extracted from them. The only way to set the matter at rest with the world is to have his book regularly examined, with that view, in an authorized conference—a proceeding which you have been long importuned to adopt. Until that be done you have no right to charge your opponents with pertinacity ; for they will be held, by all impartial persons, justified by facts as well as sound in faith ; accurate in the one, catholic in the other, and free from blame or offence in both.

Who then, Sir, but must be astonished to see, on the one side, a justification so complete, and, on the other, denunciations so violent ? Who would suppose that the question between you was, in reality, one of no importance, when they see the earnestness with which it is sought to enforce belief entirely without proof ? Who would conjecture that the Church could be thrown into such agitation, actually for a nullity—‘ *pro nihilo* ’—as St. Bernard styles it ? But herein consists the refinement of your proceeding, in aiming to make it believed that such momentous issues depend upon a matter so unimportant ; and to impress upon the influential persons, whose ear you have gained, that the questions in debate involve the most pernicious errors of Calvin, and the

most solemn articles of faith, in order that, under such conviction, they may exert all their zeal and all their weight of authority against your opponents, as if the very existence of the Catholic religion were at stake! Could they, on the other hand, be made to perceive that the question regards a simple fact (as we have repeatedly said,) their disproportionate excitement would subside, and they would regret rather to have lent themselves to subserve your personal prejudices and passions, in a matter utterly unimportant to the interests of the Church.

For even—to take the matter at the worst—were it true that Jansenius did hold the propositions in question, where had been the great evil, that a few persons laboured under doubt of the fact, provided they proved that they actually detested those dogmas, and had made public declarations to that effect? Is it not enough that they have been condemned by all the world, without exception, in the sense in which they ought to be condemned? Could they be more the object of censure, if it were established that Jansenius adopted them? For what purpose is it then that you require this condemnation, except to asperse the memory of a divine and a bishop, who died in the faithful communion of the Church? I am unable to see that this would be so great a benefit, as to compensate for all these perturbations. What interest in a question such as this has the State; the Papacy, the Bishops, the Doctors, the entire Church? It concerns them not in any the slightest degree; and it is in reality your Society alone, Reverend Father, that could derive satisfaction from defaming a writer, who has inflicted upon yourselves an injury never to be forgiven! This is the

secret cause—this the originating impulse—of agitations, which would subside at once if the motives of your controversy were seen through. And therefore it is, that it became a matter of the highest importance to the repose of the Church to give the present explanation, in order that—all your obliquities being exposed—it might be manifest to the world that your accusations are without foundation, your opponents without blame, and the Church without heresy.

This, Reverend Sir, is the object I had at heart. It was an object, to my apprehension, so momentous, that I have found it difficult to understand, how those who must, equally with myself, have been alive to its importance, could be content to remain silent. If the injuries they had endured from yourselves were not sufficient to arouse them, those which the Church has sustained, might, methinks, have found in them a voice : nor can I see, how an ecclesiastic can, especially in matters which involve the soundness of his faith, justifiably abandon his reputation to calumnious reproach. Yet have they, without resistance, allowed you to publish whatever representations you thought proper ; and, thus, but for the opportunity which accident put into my hands to take up the cause, there would perhaps have been given no check or counteraction to those scandalous statements which you have been so assiduous in circulating in every direction. I must confess, therefore, that their forbearance occasions me some surprise ; and the more so, as they cannot be suspected, either of a failure of courage or a want of ability ; they are deficient neither in ground of justification, nor in zeal for

truth. Such conscientiousness of endurance may, it is possible, be carried to an extreme.* For me, however, my good Father, I am unable to follow their example. Do *you* leave the Church in peace, and I will gladly be silent. But so long as you continue unceasingly to vex her with your outrages, be assured there shall never be wanting those who—lovers of peace themselves—do not deem it inconsistent with Christian duty, to use active efforts, for the purpose of *enforcing* her tranquillity !

* This ebullition of momentary impatience against his aggrieved and patient colleagues, will be seen to be gracefully atoned for in the beautiful tribute to their virtues and sufferings, in the ensuing short but precious fragment. (Transl.)

LETTER XIX.

FRAGMENT OF A NINETEENTH PROVINCIAL LETTER,
ADDRESSED TO THE PERE ANNAT.

REVEREND SIR,

IF I have caused you some dissatisfaction, in former Letters, by my endeavours to establish the innocence of those whom you were labouring to asperse, I shall afford you pleasure in the present, by making you acquainted with the sufferings which you have inflicted upon them. Be comforted, my good Father, the objects of your enmity are in distress ! And if the Reverend the Bishops should be induced to carry out, in their respective dioceses, the advice you have given them, to cause to be subscribed and sworn a certain matter of fact, which is, in itself, not credible, and which it cannot be obligatory upon any one to believe—you will indeed succeed in plunging your opponents into the depth of sorrow, at witnessing the Church brought into so abject a condition.

Yes, Sir, I have *seen* them ; and it was with a satisfaction inexpressible ! I have seen these holy men ; and this was the attitude in which they were found. They were not wrapt up in a philosophic magnanimity ; they did not affect to exhibit that indiscriminate firmness, which urges implicit obedience to every momentary impulse of duty ; nor yet were they in a frame of weakness and timidity which would prevent them from either dis-

cerning the truth, or following it when discerned. But I found them with minds pious, composed, and unshaken; impressed with a meek deference for ecclesiastical authority; with tenderness of spirit, zeal for truth, and a desire to ascertain and obey her dictates: filled with a salutary suspicion of themselves, distrusting their own infirmity, and regretting that it should be thus exposed to trial: yet, withal, sustained by a modest hope that their Lord will deign to instruct them by his illuminations, and sustain them by his power; and believing, that that grace of their Saviour, whose sacred influences it is their endeavour to maintain, and for whose cause they are brought into suffering, will be, at once, their guide and their support! I have, in fine, seen them maintaining a character of Christian piety, whose power

I found them surrounded by their friends, who had hastened to impart to them those counsels which they deemed the most fitting in their present exigency. I have heard those counsels; I have observed the manner in which they were received, and the answers given: and truly, my Father, had you yourself been present, I think you would have acknowledged that, in their whole procedure, there was the entire absence of a spirit of insubordination and schism; and that their only desire and aim was, to preserve inviolate two things—to them infinitely precious—peace and truth.

For, after due representations had been made to them, of the penalties they would draw upon themselves by their refusal to sign the Constitution, and the scandal it might cause in the Church, their reply was
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* See Appendix, No. IX.

LETTER XX.*

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED UNDER THE TITLE OF A LETTER
FROM AN ADVOCATE OF PARLIAMENT TO A FRIEND,
RESPECTING THE INQUISITION PROPOSED TO BE ESTABLISHED
IN FRANCE, IN PURSUANCE OF THE RECENT
BULL OF POPE ALEXANDER VII.

SIR,

June 1, 1657.

You imagine that all your affairs are going on satisfactorily, because your process is not unsuccessful; but you will soon discover that you are very insufficiently acquainted with what is passing. You are fortunate in looking at the course of affairs only from a distance. We have found ourselves on the verge of the establishment of an Inquisition in France, and are not as yet free from the

* This Letter is not Pascal's; it is the production of M. Le Maitre, brother of Le Maitre de Sacy, both nephews of M. Arnauld on the side of their mother, the daughter of the celebrated Ant. Arnauld, advocate, so well known in the controversies of the Jesuits with the University of Paris. M. L. Maitre, whose pleadings are still extant, was one of the most able, eloquent, and virtuous men of his time. He quitted the profession of advocate to retire within the Port Royal at Paris, as into the bosom of his own family; and afterwards, in order to lead a life of yet greater solitude, he proceeded to seclude himself within the walls of the Port Royal in the Fields, which was then deserted of all but himself. He there abandoned himself wholly to religious studies and penitential exercises. He died the 4th of November, 1658. (Fr. Editor.)

danger. The agent of the Court of Rome, and certain Bishops of influence in that assembly, have been uniting their efforts for its institution, taking for their authority the Bull of Pope Alexander VII., on the subject of the five propositions. This Bull has been addressed to the Clergy, and conditions annexed to it suited to their object; for it has been decreed in the assembly, that it shall be subscribed * by all the ecclesiastics in the kingdom, without exception, and that those refusing to sign shall be proceeded against by all the usual means for suppressing heresy, that is, the loss of their benefices, and other well-known violent measures.

You see now what is the meaning of all this: the *Inquisition* is established, unless the Parliament should interpose. To its decision this Bull is to be submitted; and if its consent be given, France is yoked and coerced like other nations.

I reflect much upon this proceeding, and can see in it nothing but evil. The world at large perceives not its tendency and consequences. This is not a question of religion but of policy; and I am much mistaken if Jansenism, against which it is ostensibly directed, be any thing more than a pretext; for—an Inquisition once established—while we are amused with the promise of its abolition, we shall insensibly yield to its imposition, and by degrees become accustomed to its tyranny.

Admit that to enforce the belief that the propositions are contained in Jansenism is right: yet are the means

* The formulary referred to was administered to and subscribed by the clergy throughout France, with more or less strictness, according to the personal character of the bishops. (Fr. Editor.)

used for the purpose objectionable. This privation of benefices is, I maintain, a novel and dangerous precedent, and one that affects many more than you may imagine. Do you, Sir, suppose that we have no interest in the matter, because we are not ecclesiastics? Let us not deceive ourselves: this concerns us all, whoever we may be—if not in our own persons, at least for our relatives, our friends, our children. Your son—for example—now studying at the Sorbonne, may he not hereafter come into some benefice, through his uncle? And my son, the Prior, has not he a direct and personal interest? You will say they have only to subscribe, and they are secure. Granted. But is it nothing to us, that their safety depends on such a contingency as this? Suppose my son should have a fancy that these propositions are not to be found in Jansenius (as it is too much to be feared he may, for he is in frequent communication with his cousin the doctor, who maintains that he has never been able to find them there)—and thus, not believing the fact to be so, he cannot affirm it by his subscription, for this would be a falsehood; and he would rather lose everything in the world than offend against his God—suppose him, I say, to have such a fancy as this—what becomes of my benefices, which I have been at such pains to procure for him?

You see plainly then, that a man may have no concern in the matter to-day, but he may have much to-morrow. Can no means be found to prove that these propositions are in the book, without troubling the whole kingdom? A worthy cause indeed for all this hubbub! When their controversies were only about books, I allowed them to go on without interfering. But it is a happy method,

truly, of terminating their differences, to bring all this trouble into families that have taken no part in their dispute, and to introduce into France a new Inquisition, with all its agreeable consequences. God only knows what it will grow into, when once it has fixed its root in our soil. We shall speedily see that no one can be safe; for let a man only have some influential enemies, who bear a grudge against him, and charge him with Jansenism, on account of his having a few of their books in his library, or putting forth a somewhat free discourse on the subject of these new Bulls (as *other* advocates with whom you are acquainted have done before); and at once he is put in jeopardy. And then, there is the miserable prospect of legal proceedings! Why, what is so easy as to involve a man in such a process; a man too, perhaps, of all others the most free from offence! We have already had instances of this. It is not now the first time that these schemes have been formed: they have been long practising the art of tormenting their unoffending victims, upon the Bull and Briefs of Innocent X.; and you know how the Canons of Beauvais were persecuted by attempts to compel them to subscribe, on pain of expulsion from their prebends; of which they would at this time have been dispossessed, had they not resorted to an appeal to the courts; by means of which the attempts of their enemies were frustrated.

Indeed there is nothing so effectual against the Inquisition as this kind of appeal. This they are well aware of; and they take care to preclude the subjects of their persecution from this resource, when they determine to tyrannize over them at their pleasure. Thus it was that they

proceeded against the Curate of Lebuine in Guienne, against whom they caused to be got up a charge of Jansenism, and cited him before certain Commissioners, appointed by the Council of the Archbishop of Bordeaux. But as these persons were not his proper judges, and seemed, besides, deeply prejudiced against him, he appealed from them, and demanded to be heard before the Vicars General, or the chief Judge of the Archbishop's Court. This was refused. He then appealed to the Archbishop himself, and finally to the Pope; while still the Commissioners would not desist from their proceedings against him. As his last resource, he took his cause into the Civil Courts. There his defence was allowed, and he was on the point of escaping; when his opponents obtained an arrest of judgment, *ignoring* the competency of the court, and referring his case back to the original Commission. In this way he was persecuted for above six months; during which period he was compelled to quit his curacy, and repair, at much trouble and expense, to Paris, in order to demand justice at the hands of the King and his Archbishop. By him, I hear, he has been re-instated in his cure; but who could repay all the labour and anxiety which the adversaries of this poor man caused him, while they themselves incurred no risk or trouble?

It is plain, then, that the Inquisition is a sure and most convenient instrument of molesting an opponent, however innocent he may be. Here was a person utterly free from real cause of censure; and similar was the case of the Curate of Pomegrol, also in Guienne, who was arrested, and thrown into a dungeon, without any legal charge or

explanation, precisely in the manner of the Romish Inquisition. Then, proofs were sought for, to convict him of Jansenism. But the judges were astonished to discover, by means of the evidence tendered to them, the entire innocence of this good man, and, at the same time, the incredible superstition of his parishioners; for one of their principal charges against him was, "that he had preached that Jesus Christ was in the holy sacrament, and not in their *flag*!" And this, because he had reproved them for turning, when the host was elevated, to the banner on which was a painting of Christ, and not in adoration to the holy element! This so entirely confounded the judges, that they instantly caused him to be released from prison, where he had been confined above *two months*; yet notwithstanding all his demands that the proceedings should be brought to a conclusion, and due judgment awarded against either him or his adversaries, he could procure no satisfaction for his shameful treatment.

Now, Sir, these must be confessed to be no unfair specimens of the proceedings of these Commissioners, seeing they are but in the commencement of their career. And if they can make such good use of Constitutions and Briefs not yet sanctioned by the courts, what will they not do with their Bulls, when invested with full legal authority? It is utterly ludicrous to pretend, as by some is done, that the registration of the Bull is not to involve the establishment of the Inquisition, and to be without prejudice to our liberties. I should as soon expect to be told that we can be killed without danger to life. It is not the name of Inquisition we fear; it is the thing. By whatever name it is called, it is a real and effective

violation of liberty, to be treated as the clergy pretend to treat us !

And do you not also perceive how poor a satisfaction it is to tell us, that the Courts retain always in their own breast the final decision upon the appeals ? By entertaining the Bull in question, they do away with the chief ground upon which such appeals rest, and which would have still existed if the Bull had not been received. For, although the power to appeal may remain, to what persecutions may those unhappy persons be exposed who are in situations too remote to avail themselves of this resource ! What would not a poor curate of Lyons or Poitou endure, rather than expose himself to the evils and expense of a journey to Paris !

If this Bull, then, be once received, they will find their strength pretty considerable, even should the right of appeal be continued. Therefore I think they have been but ill-advised to entertain the question, which I see reported in the last Report, printed by Vitré, page 2 ; “ That the King be humbly requested to transmit to all his Courts a general order, forbidding them to entertain any appeals which may be lodged with them on the subject of these signatures ! ” What have they gained by this, except to prove that they feel, themselves, the injustice of their schemes, since they are afraid of the opposition of the Courts, and are desirous of tying up their hands, in order to ensure their success ? Could they take any better way of evincing their passion for supremacy and Inquisition ? They show want of policy, therefore, in betraying openly to the world their designs. It was not the best method to obtain the registration which they sought,

to show thus beforehand the purposes to which they meant it should be applied. They perceived this, indeed, themselves; but it was too late. For, after having the Report, referred to, printed, and formally furnishing the Bishops with copies, signed by the clerical agents; when they discovered the injury it might cause them, they began to take measures for suppressing it; all which tended only the more clearly to reveal their artifices. Notwithstanding this, however, they fancy that, as their demand is so moderate, and the simplest, in appearance, that they could possibly have made, the Courts will fall into the snare, and merely look at the surface of the measure proposed, without weighing the ulterior consequences; but which they themselves have unreservedly revealed in their own authentic documents.

It was a happy conceit indeed, that they could make the Courts their dupe! But I am mistaken if they do not find that they are the dupes themselves. I see the course that the affair is taking. I converse daily with Councillors fresh from the Palace, and there is not one that does not see clearly into the matter. Your own reporter told me this very morning, that he did not look upon this as an ordinary question; and that this ought not to be regarded as a simple Bull, which was to arbitrate upon some contested but insignificant point; but as the foundation of a new Inquisition sought to be established, and which waited only the consent of the Courts to be irrevocably fastened upon the nation!

I have felt quite at ease since I found the Parliament.*

* The Pope and Bishops, and even the Jesuits themselves, feared nothing so much as the Parliament of Paris. (Fr. Edit.)

thus considerably dealing with the matter. For, in fact, had there been nothing objectionable in this Bull itself—instead of being filled with important nullities;* still the Parliament could not in these days entertain it, were it only for the consequences which were sought to be drawn from it. How many things are there which may be proper at one time, and not at another? This was well represented by the Sorbonne, when it was attempted to compel all her learned members to protest, “that they would say nothing contrary to the decrees of the Popes, without restriction, and without reservation, that they should not be opposed to the rights and liberties of the kingdom,”—a measure to which they were urged by the example of certain ancient doctors, who it was said had done the same thing. They, however, in their proceedings upon this matter, declared that M. Fillesac, President of the Sorbonne, published in 1628, first of all, “that if any persons had on any former occasion made such a disclaimer, it was an extraordinary act, not binding upon them now; and further, that such a thing might have been done conscientiously in past times, and yet, in consequence of change of circumstances, not be expedient at present.” And the reasons assigned p. 89, are, “that, in the lapse of several centuries, the Popes have issued numerous Decrees, Acts, and Bulls, of Constitutions, contrary to ancient Decrees, and even opposed to Holy Writ.”

Of these they adduced many instances, both of such as were contrary to Scripture, as well as such as were repug-

* ‘Nullités essentielles.’ (Fr.)

nant to the liberties of the Gallic Church and the kingly authority ; and, among others, that of Pope Boniface VIII, which pronounces heretical those who do not hold that the King of France is subject to him, even in things temporal ; and the Bull—" Unam Sanctam "—which declares " that it is necessary to salvation to believe that the Pope holds both the swords—as well the spiritual as the temporal—and that every human creature is subject to him : so that, according to this declaration, it is heretical to assert the contrary. To which these Professors added the Bull " Cum ex apostolatus," which declares " that all persons, whether kings or private individuals, who fall into heresy, or give countenance to, or conceal the persons of heretics, shall be removed from and rendered for ever incapable of all honours, dignities, or properties, but that such shall belong to any persons who can get possession of them." Hereupon they assert, that in the present state of circumstances at the Court of Rome, it is impossible that any persons should bind themselves to obey these Bulls without reservation ; and thus further allege against such conformity the universal temper of men's minds at *that* day.

This is their language, p. 47 : " We are now arrived at a period at which—and that during the last fifty years—we have witnessed the publication of various similar Bulls, which challenge this imaginary right over the disposition of kingdoms. We have also observed during the same time the publication of many works of the same description, highly prejudicial to the State, and threatening the life even of our kings ; among others that execrable one

entitled 'Admonitio ;' * and that of Sanctarel, a Jesuit, both composed for the purpose of supporting these doctrines against the King and his prerogatives. From whence it clearly appears," they further say, pp. 53 and 95, " what is the object of those who demand of us these new protestations, being no other than artfully to overturn the fundamental laws of this realm, to which these Papal Decrees are opposed ; making it but too plain and manifest that the practices and artifice employed in furtherance of these novelties have no other aim and object than to authorize the Bulls against the King's authority, and to elude the censure of the works of the Jesuits Sanctarel and Mariana, as also those Decrees of the Council and Parliament which condemn this detestable doctrine." Whence, they conclude, as they had argued at pp. 46 and 47, " that even were it true—which it is not—that these protestations had been acquiesced in during a long period of time, it would now be necessary to reject them.

I say the same now in our own case. If it were to be

* This scandalous publication appeared in 1625, under the title of ' G. R. Theologi ad Ludovicum XIII. Admonitio, &c. in 4to. Augustæ Vindelicorum, 1625.' Also, in German, 4to. 1625. Also, in French, 4to. Francheville, 1627. It was at first attributed to John Boucher, a celebrated Leaguer, formerly Curate of St. Benoit, in Paris, and afterwards Archdeacon of Tournay : but it has been since ascertained to have been written by Andre Endemon-Johannes, a Jesuit, who came to France with Cardinal Barberin, Pope's Legate. This Jesuit died at Rouen, 24th Dec., 1625. In this Book he attacks the alliances which the King had formed, for the defence of his realm, with the Protestant States ; and has scattered throughout the work such a multitude of pernicious maxims upon State matters, as disgusted all classes of persons. It was several times publicly condemned ; but it is now entirely forgotten. Sanctarel was another Jesuit, whose writings have been condemned by the Sorbonne. Both these condemnations may be seen in the ' Collectio Judiciorum,' of M. Dargentré, Bishop of Tulle.

maintained—which it is not—that this Bull might be received, simply on its *own* merits, it could not be admitted at the present time, because, to do so would be to favor the palpable designs of those who urge its reception only to abuse its powers, and to subject us to this atrocious tribunal of the Inquisition, under the terrors of which almost the whole of Christendom is groaning. But, further, I maintain that it is in itself so full of informalities, that it cannot be received without violating all the rules of justice. I will state a few of these—for I have not yet forgotten all my canonical law.

I beg you will not laugh at the first I mention, viz., the gross solecism, which every one is acquainted with, contained in the term “*imprimantur*.” For this in itself, renders it void by the decrees of Pope Lucian III. C. ad Audientiam, tit. de Rescriptis—and so unquestionably void, that the Commentary adds, “in the opinion of all canonists, it is not competent to entertain any proof of the validity of a Bull, in opposition to such a presumption of its falsity: ‘*contra istam præsumptionem non est admittenda probatio*:’” so plain is the proof thus afforded that it has been obtained by surprise and irregularity. This it was that produced so great a sensation in Flanders; for it is clear that this defect is in the original, and therefore it has answered no purpose to cancel the later impressions; because, the original being void, the copies must be void also. Besides that it is established in law, “that the slightest change—even of a mere punctuation—renders a Bull void, and exposes the party making the change to the penalty of excommunication.” “In Bulla Cœnæ, c. licet, Rebuf. in praxi.”

Another irregularity--and one which touches us the most nearly--is, that the Pope menaces therein with penalties all who disobey the Bull. Here I leave it to the Courts to decide, whether it is competent to the Pope to threaten with penalties liege subjects of the king: "*sub poenis ipso facto incurrendis.*"

Another important irregularity is the offensive way in which the high and sacred order of the Episcopacy has been degraded, by putting it on a level with the lowest orders, by that clause in which the Pope, speaking of himself, when a cardinal and bishop, says, he was then "*in minoribus,*"--an expression which renders the Bull void, according to the Chapter: "*Quam gravi, titul: de crimine falsi;*" in which it is set forth that, if a Pope, speaking of a Bishop, calls him "his Son," instead of "his Brother," to the detriment of the bond subsisting between him and the whole episcopal body, the Act in which the expression occurs shall be void. What then is to be said of the one in question, in which the Pope treats the bishops, not as sons, but as inferiors: * a term so offensive and degrading, that the assembled clergy, who had not ordinarily shown too much zeal on behalf of the Episcopate, changed the expression in their version of the Bull, making the best they could of the passage in which it occurred? They did not, however, by this means succeed in removing the affront to their character, which continued under the stigma in the original document, as well as in the Latin version: so that the alteration seemed only to render more striking the outrage done to their dignity, and their own weakness in submitting to it.

* 'Mineurs,' (Fr.)

Do you ask for other instances? What will you say to the fact that the Pope is not satisfied with forbidding to write, preach, or say any thing against his decisions, as it is admitted he has the power to do by virtue of his supreme station in the Church; but he would go beyond all this, and insist upon our *believing* implicitly all his decisions—" *Teneant*:" all which, we might perceive, without confessing "that we and our king are his subjects even in temporal matters;" since their Bulls declare plainly, "that it is heresy to affirm the contrary: '*Aliter sentientes hæreticos reputamus*;' " as said Boniface VIII. to our own King Philip le Bel. It is then incontrovertible, that if we hold the Pope to be infallible, we must either acknowledge ourselves to be his slaves, or pass for heretics; since we should otherwise be opposing ourselves to an infallible authority. Therefore it is that the Church has never recognized this infallibility in the Pope, but only in the General Council, to which there has always been a right of appeal from unsound decisions on the part of the Popes. And while, in order to establish their supremacy, they have often assumed to treat as heretics such as appealed from them to their Councils, as did Pius II., Julius II., and Leon X.; the Church, on the contrary, maintains, on the authority of a decision in full assembly, that the Pope is obnoxious to such appeal. And on this account it is, that our Sovereigns, their Procurator General, the entire Universities, and various individual members of the body, have so often appealed from the Bulls to the Council, as may be seen set forth throughout the thirteenth chapter of the "Liberties of the Gallican Church." Thus the main foundation of our liberties,

and that which M. Pithou considers them all to depend upon, is the ancient maxim, "That although the Pope be supreme in spiritual things, in France, nevertheless, a sovereign power has no existence, but is bounded and limited by the rules and decisions of ancient Councils ; ' et in hoc *maximé* consistit libertas Ecclesiæ Gallicanæ,' according to the University of Paris." Upon which M. Du Puy, in his Commentaries upon these liberties, dedicated to the late M. Molé, First President and Keeper of the Seals, printed under authority by Cramoisy, reports, page 30, that our theologians style the plenary power of the Pope, "an instrument of commotion, and a diabolical term—' *plenam tempestatem et verbum diabolicum.*' "

These are the sentiments of our doctors, following whom, we have always held, "that the decision of the Pope does not bind us to believe in conformity therewith, even in matters of faith ; because he himself is liable to error in faith ; but only, not to gainsay such decision except for weighty considerations : ' In causis fidei, determinatio solius Papæ, ut Papæ, non ligat ad credendum, quia est deviabilis a fide,' " as Gerson affirms ! The Pope then aims to contravene our liberty in this Bull, by compelling us to submit to his decisions, and thus it becomes a palpable nullity.

There is also more of importance in this matter than might at first sight appear, inasmuch as the Pope states that it has been investigated with all the diligence and care that can be desired—" *quâ major desiderari non possit.*" Now herein lies a secret artifice proper to be exposed ; which is, as I have already explained, that the Popes are desirous to have it believed, that they alone can

decide points of faith, and that after them nothing further can be desired ; instead of which, we maintain that it is the Councils alone which can compel men's belief ; and which leave nothing further to be desired. Thus the Pope does well, in supporting his pretensions, to endeavour to make us acknowledge that every thing has been done in the matter in question that can be desired ; although he has in reality done nothing more than consult with a few officials. But we should be very ill-advised to acquiesce in this ; since it would be to acknowledge the Pope's infallibility ; to impair incalculably our liberties, to overthrow the right of appeal to the Councils ; and even to render those Councils useless ; since the Pope's word alone would be sufficient, if he is to be held infallible. And doubt not that the partizans of the Romish Court will one day make their advantage, and draw all these consequences from this Bull, if once you should fall into their views by allowing its reception.

There are various other important informalities, which it would be tedious to particularize. No Bull that was ever issued contains so many. But that which utterly precludes its reception by the Parliament is that, being issued by the Pope alone without sanction of his Council, and even without the advice of the Cardinal's College, it can only be considered as emanating from his individual will—" *motu proprio*,"—which is a thing not recognized in this country : France never has admitted Bulls issued " *motu proprio* " in matters of faith, or in the general affairs of the Church, notwithstanding the efforts of various Popes to induce her to do so. Such was, among others, the abortive endeavour of Innocent X. on occasion of his

Bull respecting the residence of cardinals, in 1646, in which he declares, "that although issued on his individual authority, he demands that it shall have the same force as if it had been sanctioned by the Council of Cardinals." On which the late Advocate-General, M. Tulon said, "that the Pope in vain endeavoured, by such a clause as that, to supply, on his own prerogative, the want of that authority which was essential to an Act so important;" in consequence of which it was rejected as *informal*. And the last constitution of the same Pope respecting the five Propositions, even if it had pronounced upon points of faith acknowledged by all theologians, without exception, yet, on the sole ground that it had issued on his individual authority, could not have supported its claim to registration, much as his Holiness might have desiderated such a sanction. How then could that of Alexander be otherwise than rejected, seeing that, besides so many other irregularities, this cardinal defect of its having issued on individual and unsupported authority, renders it utterly incapable of admission?

It is, Sir, incontestible therefore, that no Papal Bull was ever less entitled to reception than the present; for even were its scope and tendency not so injurious, it ought to be rejected for informalities; and its tendency and contemplated objects being so bad, it ought to be rejected, if its matter were not informal. What is it then good for, when considered in both views—its irregularity in form, and its viciousness in substance? Is it not clear that if this should pass, none can ever be refused in future; and we are defencelessly exposed to all the commands which the Court of Rome may hereafter see fit to

impose—a consequence of no slight moment! Let us judge of what may befall us in future, by what has occurred already. Do you not see that this systematic multiplication of Bulls aims at strengthening progressively the greedily-desired title of Infallibility; and that, by imperceptible degrees, the world will be brought at length to a blind and ignorant belief in their authority? When once they have thus acquired a mastery over the mind of the people, in vain will the Courts oppose themselves to the attempts of Rome against the royal prerogatives! Their resistance will be regarded as mere political antagonism—not conscientious repugnance. They will themselves be branded with heresy, if such shall be the pleasure of Rome; for how should means be ever wanting to push forward such ends? According to the decrees of Boniface VIII., and others like him, there is little difference between holding that the Pope is infallible, and that we are his subjects.

You see, then, from all this, how dangerous this Bull is, both from the purpose which it is intended to serve, and from the defects in its preparation. It remains now only to remark how inconsiderable it really is, in its origin and in the matter upon which it seeks to arbitrate; which being simply a question of fact, is far from deserving all the importance it has acquired. It is clear, by the consent of every good theologian, that the denial of the fact in question cannot possibly convict any one of heresy; but at the very utmost of indiscretion. Now, that a mere indiscretion should be made to involve the loss of benefices and the penalties of heresy, is truly monstrous. Are we to treat as heretics those who are not at all such, and

when the question at issue is one that cannot constitute heresy? And yet, certain Bishops, who have made up their minds to these expulsions from benefices, and who have no plea to assign for it but this mere question of a fact, have taken upon themselves to order, in their circular of the 17th of last March, "That such as should refuse to subscribe to the fact, shall be dealt with as if they refused to subscribe upon the merits." This, however, will avail them little; with all their efforts, they will not be able to confound things which, in their very nature, are distinct. A simple fact will ever remain a simple fact, and this can never justify the depriving people of their benefices—for this is the point to which I always come back.

Then is it not as clear as the very day, that in all this the object is, not to improve us in our faith, but—to bring us in subjection to the Inquisition? I could prove this in the amplest detail, if I had leisure; and that, both by the object they have selected for their decisions, and by the methods they have pursued in pronouncing them. A worthy object of faith indeed, that Propositions which every one condemns, are to be found in a certain book! Would any one believe, that it is merely to enforce belief upon such a point as this, that the signatures of the whole Church are demanded? Credulous, indeed, must be such a person! Had such truly been their objects, what had they to do but to cite the pages containing them? And if they had really intended our edification, ought they not to have explained the objectionable opinions of Jansenius; which they however condemn without explanation—as is well expressed in the 18th,*

* Prov. Letter.

which my son showed me this morning. Mark this, then, Sir. It is *themselves* they have been thinking of—not *us*. They have selected this position, because from the prevailing prejudices against Jansenius, they thought it favourable to their views. They have hoped to improve the opportunity thus afforded them; and turning to their own purposes the desire the public has manifested for the condemnation of these doctrines, they fancied we should be so much carried away in their own favour, as to purchase their Bulls at the cost of our liberties!

Just as I was writing the last lines, I happened to meet with a very distinguished Councillor, who told me that it is an invariable rule of the Courts that they are the legitimate and natural judges of all questions of fact coming before them in ecclesiastical affairs; and therefore, there being here no other point at issue than to ascertain whether the five condemned Propositions are in Jansenius or not, it will be their province to institute such an investigation, in case the Bull should be brought before them. The case was the same in the celebrated conference of Fontainebleau, when the Cardinal Du Perron charged with error five hundred passages of the Fathers, cited by Du Plessis Mornay; and the king appointed certain lay-commissioners to adjudicate the matter. Then the question was to ascertain whether these passages really were in the Fathers, as it now is, whether these Propositions are in Jansenius; and in spite of all the clamour raised by the Nuncio, such as that none but ecclesiastics should take cognizance of an ecclesiastical question, &c., the cause remained in their hands, as the only question before them was a simple examination of facts.

He furnished me with some other cases; but this is sufficient to place the matter beyond doubt, and to show that if the Parliament should be pressed on the subject of this Bull, we shall enjoy the satisfaction of seeing it examined with every due formality, and in full assembly of the Chambers, whether these Five Propositions are in the book of Jansenius. We shall then learn whether it be an indiscretion to doubt the fact, and shall see the judgment of the Pope submitted to the judgment of the Parliament.

I cannot therefore but wonder to see this project of an Inquisition so ill-concocted, considering it emanates from persons otherwise so astute. Never could they have chosen a basis more feeble and unsafe for such a Bull, which—treating only of a question of fact—was wholly inadequate to sustain so weighty a design. Would it not, let me ask, be shameful and intolerable, that such a tribunal as the Inquisition, which France would never endure even for the regulation of faith, should now-a-days be admitted for the adjudication of a mere matter of fact; and that all parties should voluntarily concur in such a measure—the Bishops in its origination, and the Parliament in its sanction?

I utterly disbelieve, however, that it will come to this. The matter becomes far too serious for a jest. It comes home to themselves, to their relatives, to their friends;—it is of vital and universal interest. The less of servitude the better! The wise will never willingly submit to it. Let them seek other means of establishing their point. Let them write as much as they please—or, rather, let them hold their peace. They have prated too much

already. It is time to leave the world in quiet, and our benefices in security !

Should, however, the Parliament take cognizance at all of the matter, I shall not be unfurnished with proofs to show the difference between that pre-eminence, with which the Papacy was first invested by God himself, for the edification of the Church, and the infallibility which its flatterers would attribute to it, for the destruction both of the Church herself and our liberties.

END OF PROVINCIAL LETTERS.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Censure and Condemnation of the Provincial Letters.

(From the French of M. Villemain.)

IT is well known that the censure pronounced by a portion of the Sorbonne against Arnauld, gave occasion to the Provincial Letters. We have seen that Pascal, in defending his friend, was not sparing in his inflictions upon the Jesuits, who had clandestinely taken an active part in procuring the condemnation; and dearly did he make them pay for the satisfaction they had enjoyed in their success.

The Jesuits soon relinquished a conflict which had become a source of mortification to themselves; and to revenge themselves of an adversary who had inflicted upon them such deadly wounds, they succeeded in obtaining from the Court of Rome, in 1657, a formal condemnation of the Provincial Letters.

A remark suggests itself here, which will not be without utility, and may furnish the observer of human nature with a key to other anomalies of a similar kind: It is, that this very Court of Rome, with an inconsistency common in man's judgments, passed a condemnation in September 1665 and March 1666, upon the identical maxims which the illustrious author of the Provincials had so eloquently denounced.

This first act of vengeance, far from proving advantageous

to the Jesuits, was regarded by the thinking part of the public as only a fresh triumph for their opponents; and the "Apology" of their Casuists, which these devout and persecuted men published, had the effect of enlisting on their side those who had hitherto kept aloof from the dispute. Every one was eager to see the Provincials; and the Jansenists, to give them greater publicity, hastened to translate them into several different languages.

Such various humiliations could not fail to pique the pride, and inflame the hatred of the Jesuits. They put in requisition all the resources of their subtle policy, and by means of their intrigues they succeeded in obtaining from the royal authority, the condemnation and proscription of the Provincial Letters. It will be seen by the terms of the Decree, in Royal Council, that, to ensure success to the attempt, the Sorbonne did not scruple to unite with the Society of Jesuits in "presenting" the work, as *insolent and seditious*, to spiritual and temporal authority.

In order to give an idea of the conscientious dealing of the detractors of the Provincial Letters, I subjoin here some passages prefixed to the documents, which were put forward in support of the condemnation. They are taken from a collection of Bulls and other similar Acts, forming an octavo volume, printed five or six times in the course of the seventeenth century.

"In 1656, while the examination of Mr. Arnauld's Letters in the Sorbonne was pending, the famous Letters to a Provincial made their appearance, and produced great sensation: they were from the pen of M. Pascal, Arnauld's intimate friend, and the ablest writer of their party. It was fancied that these would prove an excellent method of turning off from the scent, persons only superficially informed; and of throwing into the shade the erroneous opinions which the Jansenists had so obstinately defended, by bringing them forward as defenders of the purity and severity of Christian morality.

“ The earlier Letters did not meet with the success that had been anticipated ; because, treating of the dogmas of grace, and endeavouring by every kind of artifice, to keep in the back-ground the Second Letter of Arnauld, they failed in their object in arresting the Censure, as well as that of establishing the pretended charge of injustice ; and of throwing back upon the Jesuits the odium of agitating a dogma of faith which had been attacked, and in which the whole Catholic Church was equally interested.

“ It was thus found necessary to abandon the question of grace, and to fasten exclusively upon the morality of the Jesuits ; this was done in the fourteen subsequent Letters, published in succession up to the month of March 1657.

“ The Jesuits replied to these at first by various publications, and afterwards in a more methodical manner ; proving the various misinterpretations in the Letters, and the bad faith with which the quotations from their authors were furnished ; as well as the palpable difference between the severe maxims of M. Pascal, and the relaxations introduced by the Jansenists into their moral code.

“ This proceeding closed the writer’s mouth ; and subsequently, all the letters were condemned by the Pope, on the 6th September, 1657, having been previously burnt by the hands of the public executioner, by a Decree of the Parliament of Aix, of Feb. 22, 1657—the same having been also done at Paris, by a Decree of the Council of State held coincidently with a convocation of Prelates and Doctors.”

*Condemnation of the Letters of M. Pascal, this Tuesday,
6th September, 1657.*

At a general congregation of the holy and universal Inquisition of Rome, held at the Apostolical Palace of St. Marie-Majeure, in presence of our most holy Father Alexander, by the grace of God, Pope, the seventh of that name, and of the

most eminent and reverend Cardinals, Inquisitors General of the heretics, in the Christian Republic, specially appointed by the Apostolic See.

Our most holy Father, Pope Alexander VII. interdicts and condemns by this Decree, and declares to be interdicted and condemned, under the penalties and censures directed by the Council of Trent, and in the Index of Condemned Books, and all other such penalties and censures as it shall please His Holiness to appoint :

Eighteen Letters written in French, whose titles are— [Here follow the titles of the eighteen Letters, and of several other small treatises; and then another work, unconnected with the Provincials.]

(Votes of thirteen Theologians.)

“ In order to give wider circulation to the Provincial Letters, and to excite still more disgust at the alleged laxities of the Jesuits, it was determined to translate them into Latin,* and to add to them notes still more calumnious than the text. The success of the proceeding was not what had been anticipated. Montaltius, which was the name adopted by the translator, and Wendrock, that of the author of the notes, were examined by Royal order; for which purpose a commission was appointed of four of the most eminent Bishops and six learned Doctors. They gave an opinion upon the two works, to the effect that the heresies condemned in Jansenius were openly maintained in them, and that they abounded in sentiments injurious to the Pope, the Bishops, the sacred person of the King, his Ministers, the faculty of Paris, and the religious orders. Accordingly they were remitted by Decree of the Council of State, on the report of M. Balthazar, to the Civil Lieutenant, to be burnt by the common executioner. The Decree is dated the 23rd September, 1660: the sentence of the Lieutenant, the 8th Oct.; and they were carried into

* Nicole translated the Provincials into Latin, under the title, ‘ *Litteræ de Morali et Politicâ Jesuitarum disciplinâ*,’

execution at the Croix-du-Tiroir, on the 14th of the same month, 1660. They added to these two works, one entitled 'Disquisitions of Paul Irénée,' which shared the same fate."

Sentence of the Bishops and Doctors upon the Latin Translation of the Provincial Letters.

We the undersigned, nominated by the Decree in Council of his Majesty to report our opinion of a work entitled "Letters to a Provincial; by Louis de Montalte," &c. Having diligently examined the said work, we declare that we find the heresies of Jansenius, condemned by the Church, to be contained and defended therein, both in the Letters of the said Louis de Montalte, and the notes upon the same by Guillaume Wendrock; as also in the Disquisitions of Paul Irénée, subjoined to the same: all which is so manifest, that if any one deny it, he either cannot have read or understood the books, or, what is worse, he does not allow to be heretical that which has been condemned as such by the Gallican Church and the sacred faculty of Paris. We further declare, that these three authors are so insolent and so hardened in defamation that they spare neither rank nor persons; neither the Sovereign Pontiff, nor Bishops, nor the King, nor his Ministers, nor the sacred faculty of Paris, nor religious orders: and therefore we hold the said work to be liable to the penalties adjudged against defamatory libels and heretical writings. Given at Paris this 7th Sept. 1660.

Henry de la Motte, Bishop of Rennes; Harduin, Bishop of Rhodes; Francis, Bishop of Amiens; Charles, Bishop of Suissons; M. Grandin; G. de L'Estocq; C. Morel; L. Bail; Chapelas, Curate of St. Jacques; Chamillard; Saussay; F. Jean Nicolay, de L'ordre de Frères Prescheurs; F. M. de Gangy, Carme.

Decree of the Council of State against the Letters to a Provincial.

Seeing, by the King in Council, a Decree was issued on the 12th of August last, on the subject of various complaints made to his Majesty, purporting that, besides that the Constitutions of Popes Innocent X. and Alexander VII. condemn the doctrine of Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, contained in the work entitled "Augustinus," and the said conclusions have been admitted by the General Assembly of the Clergy of France, published by the prelates in their dioceses, executed by the Universities, confirmed also by the declarations of his Majesty, and registered by the Parliamentary Courts: notwithstanding which, writings are being continually published, which support the said condemned doctrine; and, among others, a publication under the title of "Ludovici Montalti Litteræ Provinciales," &c., which, besides containing heretical propositions, is defamatory of the memory of the late King Louis XIII., of glorious memory, and to that of his principal Ministers of State; by which Decree his Majesty, in his care for public welfare, has directed that the said book shall be remitted, through the Sieur Balthazar, Commissioner, to be read and inspected, and to receive the opinions of the Bishops of Rennes, Rhodes, Amiens, and Soissons, together with Messieurs Grandin, &c., &c., &c., and Fathers Nicolai and Gangy, Doctors of the Sorbonne, and a report to be made by them thereupon: the Procès verbal of the said Commissioners of the 7th of this September, purports, that having diligently examined the said book, they declare that the heresies of Jansenius, condemned by the Church, are maintained and defended in all the aforesaid writings. So manifest is this, that if any one deny it, &c., &c., (as in the preceding document) and the said works are liable to the penalties awarded against defamatory libels and heretical works.—Upon these premises, his Majesty in Council ordains and commands that the said

book shall be remitted to the Sieur Daubrai, Lieutenant of the Chatelet, Paris, to be caused by him to be burnt by the common executioner : of the execution of which Decree his Majesty is to be apprized in eight days herefrom : and in the mean time all booksellers, printers, librarians, colporteurs, and others, are expressly forbidden to print, sell, and publish, or to have in their possession the said Book, with or without notes, additions, and disquisitions of the said Wendrock and Paul Irénée, on pain of condign punishment. And this Decree shall be at once carried into execution : any opposition or appeal notwithstanding, of which, if any such be made, his Majesty reserves to himself the cognizance thereof, without intervention of any other authorities. Given at the Council of State—his Majesty being present thereat—at Paris, this 23rd. day of September, 1660.

(Signed) PHILIPPEAUX.

(The Decree was carried into execution, with all the prescribed formalities, and an Act of Registration of the same regularly drawn up, signed “ Berthelot.”)

No. II.

ARNAULD.

ANTOINE ARNAULD was the son of the eminent advocate of the same name, who is distinguished in the annals of the French bar, by having sustained the cause of the University of Paris, in their proceedings against the Jesuits, at the close of the sixteenth century. His brilliant invectives on that memorable occasion, raised a storm against the principles and practice of that body, which was never afterwards allayed. His name, also, as well as that of his illustrious son, and other members of his family, is intimately associated with the records of the

Port Royal. He bore, indeed, the title of its "Father;" having made large contributions to its funds: and, after his death, his widow and several surviving daughters became inmates within its walls.

His son Anthony, as has been elsewhere remarked, seemed, like the descendants of Hannibal, to inherit his father's antipathy to the Jesuits, and—as was to be expected—experienced even an aggravated share of their hostility. What he did not inherit, however, was the predilection for *celibacy*, which, under mistaken views of Christian duty, and social obligations, he and his devoted colleagues, lay as well as clerical, cherished and acted upon. His father had entered into the married stage in his 25th year; and his wife, who was the daughter of another distinguished advocate, and whose affections he is said to have gained by the charms of his forensic eloquence, was, according to common report, only twelve years of age, when she gave her hand to the foremost man in the French law-courts. This precocious union (at least on the female side) was crowned with an abundant progeny; for Anthony, who was born in 1612, was the youngest of *twenty* children, of whom eleven were sons, and nine daughters.

He received the early part of his education with his nephew Isaac le Maitre (or de Sacy) who was very little his junior; and who afterwards, like himself, became a distinguished ornament of the French Church. His studies were next pursued in the College of Calvi: he then completed a course of theology in the College of Lisieux; and after that entered the Sorbonne. In 1641, he was ordained priest; shortly afterwards he gained his degree of doctor, and became a candidate for admission to the membership of the Sorbonne. The known freedom and severity of his opinions, however, upon some important theological questions, seem already to have excited prejudices against him. On the ground of alleged informality in some of the previous stages, objections were made to his election. Cardinal Richelieu, who was not likely to favour any one whom the Jesuits disliked, was ap-

pealed to, as visitor of the university ; and his decision was given against Arnauld. He would perhaps never have obtained the solicited distinction, had not Richelieu's death, shortly after this time, removed the obstacle ; and, in 1643, he became a member of Sorbonne.

It was probably about this period that he imbibed those deep views of religious truth, which ever after influenced him, and of which, through a long life, he became the uncompromising champion. In common with his nephew, De Sacy, he placed himself under the theological instructions of the pious St. Cyran, the confessor of the Port Royal. This devoted man may be regarded as the Luther or Cranmer of the semi-reformation, which was then dawning in the French Church. He was at that time an object of persecution, for his propagation of the doctrines and practice of Jansenius ; and passed the five closing years of his life in imprisonment in Vincennes, on charges of heresy. Arnauld visited him in his confinement ; and such was the mutual comfort and edification from their conferences, that the suffering confessor was wont to call his young friend and pupil " the child of his bonds." There are those who may sneer at the term ; but it will be understood by all who know the important effects which may be produced at the outset of a religious life, by the counsels of experience and piety ; and the tender recollections which will remain from such communications in the hearts of both the instructor and the pupil. He shortly after gave up some ecclesiastical preferment which had been conferred upon him, but which he now deemed inconsistent with duty to hold ; joined the recluses of the Port Royal ; devoted to its funds the principal part of his property ; and from the ascendancy of his attainments and talents, soon found assigned to him the leading place in that remarkable association. It was indeed in all respects a remarkable one. Never, perhaps, was more learning and talent, more purity of life, and more singleness and disinterestedness of aim and object, united in a body of men, than in the Associates of Port Royal. Their theological

system was far, indeed, from being unalloyed, either in doctrine or practice, with many of the errors of Popery. They had not attained to those clear views of scriptural truth, which it is our privilege, in the full maturity of Protestantism, now to enjoy. But they were greatly in advance of the age in which they lived; their voice was boldly lifted up against the moral corruptions of Popery, especially as embodied in the system of Jesuitism; and their ardour for truth, their sincerity in its advocacy, and, above all, their own profound study of the Scripture, and earnest efforts for its diffusion, would assuredly have led—had circumstances remained favourable to their endeavours—to the effectual purification, in doctrine and discipline, of the Church, to whose communion they so fondly adhered.

The eager spirit of Arnauld soon impelled him into controversy. The subject on which he first essayed his polemical powers, was the abuses introduced by the Jesuits into the doctrine of the Eucharist. His treatise was entitled, “*De la frequente Communion* ;” and in this tract he vehemently opposed the dogmas of intrinsic virtue and effectual operation (the “*opus operatum*”) in the sacrament, and insisted on the necessity of preparation for the solemnity, by faith and repentance. This was soon followed by other publications on the doctrines of Grace, grounded on the views of St. Augustine; and these drew forth angry but ineffective answers from the Jesuits, and rendered him the object of their relentless antipathy. Their great aim was to embroil him with the Sorbonne; and in this, after some years had elapsed, they were successful. The immediate cause of the dispute was the following. The Duke de Liancour, a friend and patron of Port Royal, had placed one of his daughters for education in the convent of the same name; and had further taken into his house, as a kind of domestic chaplain, one of their associates, the Abbé de Bourzaye. This double instance of disloyalty to the dominant party in the Church, excited so much irritation on their part, that on the Duke presenting himself

to his confessor for absolution, he found the rite refused him; and was informed that it would only be granted on condition of removing his daughter from the convent, and dismissing the Abbé from his establishment. This indecent proceeding brought Arnauld promptly into the field. First, in an anonymous letter to the Duke, and then in a more elaborate publication, to which he affixed his name; he denounced the tyranny attempted to be exercised over conscience and private right; and overwhelmed the opponents of the Jansenists with severe invective. On this occasion the Jesuits succeeded in bringing before the Sorbonne the obnoxious Propositions extracted from his works, and alleged to be founded on those of Jansenius, which had been previously subjected to the Papal censure. Their history is immortalized by Pascal in the foregoing pages; and the sequel of the proceeding was the expulsion of Arnauld from the Sorbonne.

Great learning and force of reasoning is thrown into these his earlier productions, and the style of Arnauld is considered, by French critics, to have exhibited much of that purity and strength which were characteristics of the Port Royal school. But a large part had been composed in Latin, and all were of a nature too didactic and abstruse for the generality of readers. In the present crisis of the Society, it was considered that some easy and popular compositions would be desirable, to interest and act upon the popular mind; and Arnauld accordingly produced a manuscript which he had carefully prepared for that purpose. With all their deference for his authority, his friends were unable to avoid showing, by their silence, that he had not succeeded. The chord that was to vibrate to the general sympathy was not struck. His controversial powers, in fact, partook more of the nature of the heavy artillery that sweeps the field, and mows down the ranks, than of the skirmishers that do their work by harassing and annoyance. Pascal, then much the junior of Arnauld, and who had but lately entered into his confidence and that of his colleagues, was appealed to; and it was suggested that younger

friends should give their aid in the controversy. He modestly undertook to draw up a sketch of a paper to meet their views; and the first Letter was shortly after produced and adopted, with the admiration of the whole body. Thus originated the "Provincial Letters."

Arnauld, on the adverse decision of the Sorbonne being pronounced, withdrew into retirement; and for twelve years was absent from Paris. During that time, and in the still longer term of banishment to which he was afterwards subjected, his history afforded little material for biography. Partly anonymous, and partly with his name, his publications continued without intermission, and their number and quantity were enormous. His ascertained treatises, at the close of his life, amounted to above 320, besides, as is believed, many that did not bear his name, and could not be identified. In addition to their staple material of theology, both practical and controversial (the latter including his voluminous missives against Jesuitism), his writings comprised almost every subject of science and literature. The following are a mere sample of their multifarious topics: a Grammar, well-known as "the Port Royal Grammar," "Elements of Geometry," "Art of Thinking," "Rules for Literary Studies," "Reflections on the eloquence of Preachers," "True and False Ideas," "On Grace," "Reflections, Philosophical and Theological," "Translations from St. Augustine," &c. &c. Some further account will be found at the close of this little memoir, of the manner in which the task of posthumously publishing this immense produce of a single mind was accomplished.

During this period, the persecutions against the Jansenists continued. Bulls were fulminated from Rome, by the instigation of the Jesuits, against the censured Propositions; and a formulary was drawn up and administered to the French clergy generally, to the effect that they received these Bulls, and condemned the doctrine of the Propositions. The whole body of the Port Royalists refused submission to the ordon-

nance; and were supported in their opposition by four bishops and many ecclesiastics. On the death of Pope Alexander, in 1667, and the accession of Clement IX., a lull took place in this unhappy controversy. The period of tranquillity, which was termed the "Peace of Clement," lasted about ten years. In 1669, consequently, Arnauld returned to Paris, and was received with the distinction that his talents and manly consistency had won from both friends and opponents. He was introduced by the Archbishop of Sens to the Pope's Nuncio, and treated by him with marked esteem. The King next expressed a wish to see the man whose polemical powers had produced so much sensation in the Church, and received him with much courtesy and respect.

His writings were, some time after this, directed against what he and his co-religionists continued to regard as the Calvinistic heresies on the doctrines of the Eucharist—in fact, in defence of "Transubstantiation." A work of prodigious learning and research—and, like all his writings, very voluminous—was produced under the title of "*Grande Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Eglise Catholique touchant l'Euchariste*;" which he and the able Nicole, who was thought to have assisted him in it, doubtless believed would effectually set at rest this long-controverted question. A Protestant will regret, that so much learning and labour, and—may it not be added?—so much piety, were not bestowed upon a subject more consistent with the truth of Scripture, and the religious well-being of man!

In another ten years, the respite of tranquillity ceased, and the scene changed. If Arnauld, in his controversies with Calvinistic doctrine, was valued as a bulwark of the Romish faith, his continued advocacy of evangelical purity and truth upon other questions, caused him still to be looked upon by the hierarchy with suspicion and dislike. The demonstrations of the Jesuits were renewed against him. He received an intimation from authority, that his residence in the metropolis would be no longer safe. He found himself obliged to quit,

not only Paris, but France ; when he retired to the Netherlands ; and never afterwards returned to the land of his birth.

This was in 1690. His age was 67, when this cruel expatriation was forced upon him. He was obliged to live in strict retirement, and to resort to frequent changes of place. But in every successive retreat he carried with him into his solitary ‘ Patmos ’ a conscience, that assured him he had borne witness to what he believed to be truth : his health continued vigorous ; and he enjoyed the resource of his exhaustless and untiring pen. His publications continued uninterrupted, and showed unabated acuteness and vigour to the last ; and in the closing months of his existence he wrote several long and well-digested letters and papers, which appear in the collections of his works. Within a short period of his decease, an abortive attempt was made to molest him, by procuring the issue against him of a canonical writ, on the part of the monastic fraternities at Liege. In this, he was contemptuously styled by them “ certum Arnauldum,” and charged with heresy. The proceeding, however, fell to the ground ; and he remained in shelter from their pitiful malignity till his death, which took place at Brussels, in August, 1694, at the well-ripened age of 83.

He was buried furtively—by night—with little attendance, and without tomb or inscription, in the church of St. Catherine in that city. But the choicest part of his earthly remains found its way back to his native country—to the chosen haunt of his youth, and the scene of his literary and polemical triumphs. It was a graceful act of the veteran divine to direct his *heart* to be sent for interment to the Port Royal. It seems almost a trait of romance mingling with the rigid habits of the scholar and the controversialist. Poetry might see in it—and he himself had once been, if not a poet, certainly a lover of poetry—a parting ray, like that which had gilded his morning sky, sent up from the cloud and shadows of evening ; or the flower of spring blooming under the decay and nodosity of the hoary oak. The bequest was indeed a precious one.

His was a heart consecrated to the highest of vocations, that of the service of God, the promotion of his glory, and the advancement (as far as it had been discovered to him) of his truth. The gift was appreciated by the devout sisterhood to whom it was consigned; it was reverently interred in the shades of the Port Royal; and a touching, but somewhat fanciful, epitaph marked the spot where the valued relic was deposited; and where it rested in peace, till the vindictiveness of the Jesuits succeeded, some years after, in mingling the sheltering walls of the living, and the memorials of the dead, in one common destruction.

The following are the lines:—

“ Ad sanctas rediit sedes, ejectas et exul;
 “ Hoste triumphato, tot tempestibus actus,
 “ Hoc portu in placido, hoc sacrâ tellure quiescit,
 “ Arnauldus, veri defensor, et arbiter æqui :—
 “ Illius ossa memor sibi vindicet externa tellus;
 “ Hoc cœlestis amor rapidis cor transtulit alis,
 “ Cor nunquam avulsum, nec amatis sedibus absens.” *

Little remains on record of the private history and personal habits of this remarkable man. What, in fact, could be known of one, of whose existence more than the half, since the age of manhood, had been spent in fugitive retirement in his own country, or in banishment in another;—of one who was, as pathetically described by Boileau,—

“ Errant, pauvre, banni, proscrit, persecuté” ?

His books were the annals of his life; his study was his world. But though thus cut off from the society of which he

- “ Within this hallowed ground—from early youth
 “ His fond retreat—great champion of the Truth,
 “ Rests Arnauld; all his well-fought contests o’er,
 “ Long tossed by storms, now reached a peaceful shore :—
 “ Though in the exile’s land his bones are laid,
 “ From this loved spot kind memory never strayed;
 “ And lo! his Heart, on love’s swift pinions flies,
 “ And calmly in this sacred precinct lies.”

was the ornament and instructor, and from the associates whom he loved, his wanderings were cheered and his solitude irradiated, by the presence of his God and Saviour; and his faithful desires and efforts to promote His glory and the spiritual welfare of man, will be known and rewarded in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be discovered.

He is said to have been unattractive in person, but to have possessed an eye of much expression and intelligence. Bayle describes him as extremely simple and unpretending in manners, and exhibiting little that was remarkable in ordinary intercourse; but he says, that when any topic that interested him was started, he would kindle with animation, and seem transformed into another man; and then pour forth vast stores of learning and illustration from the recesses of his capacious memory. He had been (as has been just noticed) addicted in early life to poetry; and to his latest years would occasionally delight his hearers by reciting verses which he could have had no opportunity of seeing since his youth.

The history of the posthumous publication of his works is curious. From the period of his death in 1694, up to the year 1758, the immense mass of his publications remained in the state in which they had been originally put forth—in pamphlets and volumes—some anonymous, others bearing his name; besides multitudes of letters and manuscripts which remained in the hands of individuals. At the last-named period, however, under the encouragement of the reigning Pope, Benedict XIV, who extended much indulgence to the class of opinions advocated by Arnauld and his successors in the Church, a society of Booksellers formed a project for collecting and publishing his works, and were permitted to issue proposals for the purpose under an official notice that it was “*par desir du Pope, et de plusieurs membres du Sacré Collège.*” The good Pope, however, was able to do no more than leave on record an expression of his wishes. His death ensued within little more than a year after the issuing of the order, and the scheme was discountenanced by his successor

Clement XIII. In fact the Jesuits prevailed with him to issue a Papal order, forbidding, under pain of excommunication, to circulate the prospectus of the proposed publication. Another turn of affairs, however, under Clement XIV, brought about the memorable dissolution of the Jesuits' Society: the path was now clear; and the long-suspended project of the publication was renewed. The parties interested delegated the task to an individual, whose modesty has not suffered him, by recording his own name, to share the honours which his labours were preparing for the object of this long and difficult undertaking: The publication was not, however, so much a proof of bibliopolist enterprize as of faith in the public willingness to absorb such a mass of reading: the work was published by subscription. In 1775, at Lausanne, appeared the entire works of Arnould, in *forty-five quarto* volumes, closely printed, and each containing the quantity of some half-dozen widely margined octavos of modern fashion; and from these are excluded (with an *apologetic* notice of the omission from the editor) the elaborate work on the 'Perpetuité de foi,' which in its original form filled three bulky quartos. The classification of contents is as follows:

1. On the Scriptures.
 2. Dogmatical, on Truths of Religion.
 3. Polemical, against Jesuits, defences of Jansenism.
 4. Polemical, against Calvin.
 5. Moral and Polemical (again) against Jesuits.
 6. Ecclesiastical Discipline.
 7. Philosophical.
 8. Belles Lettres.
- Letters Separate.

The Editor further expresses regret that many more of the anonymous works had been omitted, having eluded his most vigilant search.—Such were then the productions of this giant of literature! What must have been the universality of learning, what the depth of thought, and the extensiveness

of observation, that had served to accumulate the materials of his Herculean labours !

These mighty tomes, however, although they excited the deepest interest, and served important purposes, in their time, want the ethereal fire of genius to give them permanent vitality, to enrol them among the classics of a country, and hand them down to a late posterity. His writings were conspicuous for clearness and power, and his style has a severe purity, which contributed much to the improvement of the French language, and was at that time new in controversy. The following extract from one of his letters, given in M. Faugère's valuable collection, will be regarded with interest, from the subject of which it treats, as well as from its furnishing a pleasing specimen of the lucid simplicity of his familiar style. It is taken from a communication of Arnauld's to a personage of high rank—a Princess de Guimené—who had asked his counsel on the education of a son :—

“ It is, Madam, an undoubted fact, and your own experience, under the teaching of divine grace, as well as your personal trials, assure you of it, that high birth, illustrious condition, and great wealth, are sore hindrances to our spiritual welfare. I may however, without flattery tell you, that you have reason to hope God will bless the design with which he has inspired you, to dedicate the young Prince to his service, and thus to procure him a distinguished place in Heaven, provided you continue faithful to your object, and that you are sincere and earnest in your endeavour to confer this great benefit upon him. He possesses many gracious dispositions, and especially that which is the most needful of all—docility to instruction and submissiveness to authority, when exercised with gentleness and prudence. But the very heathen have confessed, that their most promising dispositions degenerated into vice, if not cultivated by good education. And our religion further instructs us that the best tuition needs the aid of divine grace ; and though man may plant and water, all will be vain unless God give the increase.

"If, therefore, Madam, you would follow the rules of our faith—as I know indeed you are desirous of doing—you will readily see that the most important thing of all is to find holy men, who will train your child in the ways of God, and nourish him with the influences of his Spirit. For, permit me to say, it is a mere delusion to fear, as you seem to do, that to render him pious will degrade and make him heartless, and that to walk in the ways of God will unfit him for the affairs of life. On the contrary, permit me to assure you, that if he be placed under good instruction, it will tend to elevate and inure his mind : for there is nothing so great as Christian philosophy, and no being so noble as the true Christian. The especial aim of such teaching will be to render him able, courteous, and accomplished ; directing him to the true use of all things—to employ them in the service of God, and not to the vanities of the world."

No. III.

NICOLE.

PETER NICOLE was born at Chartres in 1625, where he also received the rudiments of his education. His talents early developed themselves, and at the age of fourteen he became a proficient in the Latin and Greek classics. His father then, seeing in him the promise of great attainments, sent him to Paris, for a course of philosophical studies ; and there he early made acquaintance with the members of the Port Royal, formed the determination to share their labours, and eventually became a partaker of their celebrity and persecutions.

As soon as he had finished his allotted course of instruction,

he formally joined their Society, and his distinguished attainments in general literature pointed him out as the most suitable among their number for the department of the 'Belles Lettres.' Their choice was fully justified by the names of the distinguished scholars who, in that class, enjoyed the benefits of his instruction; especially the great Racine, the superiority of whose genius he at once discerned, and took the greatest pains to develop and direct.

After Racine had finished his studies under Nicole, and had acquired public admiration by some of his earlier works, a circumstance occurred which evinced in him an amiable trait of character, and does him high honour. Nicole had engaged in a controversy with a certain Abbé St. Soelin, a writer of inferior plays and romances, and who had put out a fanciful and mischievous work on the Apocalypse. In his refutation of the Abbé's errors, he took occasion to inveigh generally against romance-writers and theatrical poets in general, which Racine considered to be an oblique reflection upon himself. The young poet was especially stung with the quarter from whence the supposed attack came, took up a hostile attitude against the entire Port Royal, and published a tart reply to Nicole's work, which at once became very popular with the Parisian public. He was about to follow up his success by a second letter, when Boileau, the common friend of himself and Nicole, remonstrated with him on the pain which he would occasion to the latter, and the ingratitude his proceedings would show to his former preceptor, to whom he owed so much. "It shall never be published," said Racine; and so strictly did he adhere to his resolution, that although the pamphlet was actually printed, he suppressed the entire edition; and it was not till some years after—and not with his own sanction—that a copy made its appearance in an edition of Boileau's work. Racine went further even than this; he gracefully sought reconciliation with his respected friend and tutor, and made an ample apology for the wound he had inflicted upon him.

A close friendship soon sprung up between Nicole and the most eminent of the Port Royalists—Arnauld; and by him he was strongly advised to enter into holy orders. He was about to comply with his recommendation, and took some steps for the purpose, when his plans were impeded by the controversies in the Sorbonne respecting the Propositions of Janse-
nius, which ended in the publication of the Provincial Letters. Nicole was at this time engaged in preparing his work entitled “Essays upon Morals;” but he immediately hastened to the assistance of his persecuted friend Arnauld, and threw himself into the thickest of the controversy.* When the Jesuits had succeeded, by means of the public condemnation of Arnauld’s works, in procuring his banishment from Paris, and afterwards from France, he boldly defended him in every possible way; and assisted, as has been seen, their mutual friend Pascal in some of the Provincial Letters, till at length he himself became the object of similar persecution, and was compelled to follow his friend into exile from their common country.

Nicole also translated the Letters into Latin, of a high order of classic purity, accompanied by valuable notes. His style is especially formed upon the model of Terence, whom he had closely studied.

The death of his friend and patroness the Duchess de Longueville,† an eminent supporter of the Jansenists, seems to have increased his indifference to remain longer in his own

* In the midst of this polemical war, which at last became so deadly in its spirit, and so fatal in temporal consequences to the suffering Jansenists, Nicole once complained of weariness to his friend, and expressed a wish for some rest from the toils of controversy. “Rest!” impetuously exclaimed Arnauld, whose untiring labours were attested, as has been seen, in the preceding memoir, by the largest posthumous productions that were, perhaps, ever left by man—“will you not have time enough for rest in eternity?”

† The Duchess de Longueville was the daughter of the illustrious Prince de Condé. In early life she was distinguished for her beauty, and held a prominent place in the circles of fashion. She also took a warm part in

country. "I have now lost," he said, "all my little reputation; I have even lost my 'Abbey,' for she was the only person who ever called me 'Mons. L'Abbé.'"

On his return some years after to France, he employed himself in the composition of a number of works which have acquired a high reputation in French literature. The most profound of these are his *Essays on Morals*, and which extended to the number of 15 volumes: his *Essay on "The Methods of preserving Peace in Society"* is much admired; and to both works, Voltaire, although little sympathizing with the devout principles of the writer, has awarded the high meed of his critical approbation. In these tranquil studies and pursuits he attained to a good old age (unlike the premature decay of his youthful friend Pascal,) and died in 1695, in his 70th year.

No. IV.

DE SACY (LOUIS ISAAC LE MAITRE).*

THE family name of this member of the Port Royal brotherhood was Le Maitre, but the designation above given, derived from an inversion of his Christian name Isaac, is that by which he is most commonly known. He was born at Paris, in 1613; and from a very early age exhibited marks of supe-

politics, and signalized herself as a partizan on the popular side, against the Court party, in the contentions of the Fronde, encouraging the troops, and employing herself in making favours and decorations for the officers. She became devotedly pious, and attached herself ardently to the principles of Jansenius and the fortunes of the Port Royalists.

* For the materials of this brief notice, I am chiefly indebted to a *Memoir* recently published in the *Christian Observer*.

rior talent, and still more of piety and wisdom. His education was carried on with that of his uncle, by his mother's side, the eminent Anthony Arnauld. The uncle, was, however, but little older than his nephew, and they pursued their studies together, till the latter had reached his fourteenth year. At that time his mother removed to a house which she had built in the precincts of the Port Royal; and that step at once brought the young student into intimate communion with the devoted fraternity assembled within its walls, and in the end led to his joining their body.

About this period, he was placed under the instruction of the eminent and pious Abbé St. Cyran, who perceiving his superiority of parts, as well as his piety, marked him out as one who promised to be an honour and support to the Church. He shortly entered upon a course of diligent study of the Scriptures and the ancient Fathers; and, in due time, at the instance of his instructor, the Abbé, assumed the tonsure, and became a candidate for the priesthood. He then, following the example of his two elder brothers—of whom some account will be furnished in the conclusion—gave up all his property, which seems to have been not inconsiderable, to the Monastery of the Port Royal, retaining only a small income for the supply of his own simple wants.

On the death of St. Cyran, he placed himself under the spiritual instruction of M. Singlin, confessor to the nuns of Port Royal. Not long after he took up his residence in the monastery, and then, in company with his relative Arnauld, he pursued, with fresh devotedness, his theological studies; till, at the mature age of 35 or 36 he entered—and then not without some reluctance on his own part—upon the office of the priesthood. His characteristic humility seems to have peculiarly shrunk from the responsibility of ecclesiastical duties; and, in the same spirit, it is related that, after his ordination, he deferred for forty days the celebration of the mass.

This gracious disposition had indeed been always predomi-

nant in his demeanour, and was embodied by him in these lines, which he drew up for his guidance:—

“ To despise self; to despise the world;

To despise no one; to endure contempt from others:

These are the four effects of a virtue above all price,

Which founds all its glory on God alone.”

His ministerial character was such as was to be expected from the temper in which he entered on the office. To borrow the words of the narrative from which this sketch is derived, “ he was especially remarkable for moderation and gravity; for constancy in prayer, to draw down the Divine blessing; for patience in bearing with the defects of others; . . . for discrimination in judging of the marks of true piety; and for zeal to furnish religious assistance to those whom he directed.” He was eminently zealous and self-denying also, in every call of duty; and no absorption in study, no personal inconvenience, no indisposition, or severity of weather, ever withheld his patient footsteps from the house of affliction, or the sick and dying bed. Shortly after his entrance into the ministry, he was appointed Confessor to the Port Royal; his elder brother also, who had then become an inmate in the College, placed himself under his spiritual guidance and consolations; and he continued to discharge these offices, till the persecution, to which the recluses were not long after subjected from the Jesuits, obliged him to discontinue his duties.

The consequence of those persecutions was, as is well known, to effect a dispersion of the leading members, and to drive some into exile; and De Sacy’s lot—more severe even than that of the others—was to be imprisoned in the Bastille. It was during this period—a term of two years and a half—that he composed some of his most important theological works. His translation of the Bible was, however, the most valuable fruit of his imprisonment. Having completed that portion of the New Testament which he had undertaken in common with others of the Port Royalists, he conceived the project of undertaking, unaided, that of the Old Testament;

and entering upon it shortly after his arrest, he arrived at its completion exactly at the period of his release. The aid of Divine Providence was signally yielded to him in the facilities he enjoyed, under such unpromising circumstances, for this great undertaking: he acquired an ample supply of the necessary books, and had the benefit of a reader and copyist in a fellow prisoner and former scholar of his own, M. Fontaine. These solaces, together with the spirit of meek submission habitual to him, and especially the exercises of faith and prayer, so cheered his captivity, that he was accustomed to say, his "abode in the Bastile was one of the happiest periods of his life." He had long indeed been in possession of the only sources of true happiness, whether in solitude or amidst the intercourse of the world,—peace with God, and faith in the promises and hopes of the Gospel; and to this was now added, absorbing occupation in the noblest work upon which the understanding can be engaged—the communications of God to man in his own Word.

On his liberation, he immediately repaired to return thanks at the Church of Notre Dame. He was shortly after presented by the Archbishop of Paris, M. Prefice (who seems to have regarded him with much esteem,) to the King, and was allowed to exhibit to him his translation of the Bible. From him also he experienced much graciousness; although it does not appear that the Royal favour was extended beyond a benignity of reception. The only reward in fact asked by De Sacy was permission to visit the prisoners in the Bastille! This touching incident may recal to memory the disinterestedness of the Prophet of Israel after the important benefit conferred by his instrumentality upon the Syrian Prince; or still more forcibly, the yearning tenderness of the faithful Nehemiah for his brethren in their native land, when the only use he made of his favour with his indulgent Sovereign and Master was, to ask permission to rejoin them in their afflictions and labours. After this he retired to the country; but the ecclesiastical troubles having, in 1669, for a time subsided, he returned to

Paris, and again took up his residence in the Port Royal. Ten years after, however, when the government had resolved upon the entire dispersion of the Institution, the then Archbishop Haily, who seemed to have inherited his predecessor's respect and consideration for De Sacy, recommended him to retire, before the storm broke upon the devoted monastery. He obeyed the intimation, and returned again to Pomponne, where he passed the very few remaining years of his life.

He here, with his fast *décaying* powers—for he was sixty-seven—still laboured incessantly for the promotion of religion. He applied himself with great ardour and diligence to compose a Commentary upon the Scripture, and made considerable progress in the work; although its entire completion was reserved for other hands. It is described by those acquainted with it as eminently learned and instructive. The habitual feeling of his mind, while engaged in this labour, was not “to take from sacred Scripture any of its divine energy; not to study only to please the taste, or satisfy intellectual curiosity, but to edify the heart, and excite love for the truths of the sacred Books.”—He was much addicted to the distribution of religious and instructive works, especially to poor clergymen, who had not the means of buying them. With this view also he intended to bequeath his own library to a friend, who should make it useful to general circulation; but whether he was able to carry this design into effect does not appear.

His last days were now at hand. Being taken ill at Pomponne in 1683, his friends importuned him to repair to Paris, probably for the benefit of medical advice. On the third of January in the following year, being the Fête of St. Genevieve, he addressed those about him for a considerable time on the life of that Saint; and on the conclusion of his discourse, one of the persons present exclaimed, “This man belongs no more to this world, we shall not have him much longer!” He was almost immediately after seized with violent fever: the next morning, sensible that his end was approaching, he caused the last offices of his church to be performed; calmly

settled his few worldly affairs; and then, dismissing all thoughts but of God and eternity, he passed some hours in prayer and meditation, and expired on the evening of the same day, in his seventy-first year. He left many valuable writings; but his translation of the Scripture, and the portions of Commentary that he was enabled to complete, are works that have conferred an enduring benefit upon the church of his own land, which it was the great business of his life to purify and reform, and will carry down his name to a late posterity.*

In reviewing the holy and laborious life of this good man and his colleagues, some of which have been here briefly traced, there are few, I think, who will not respond to the sentiment of a contemporary writer,† of whose pages, in this simple narrative, I have availed myself; “They had not, indeed, outgrown many of the errors of the Communion in which they had been trained. . . . But may we not fear—is

* It is recorded (and is a striking instance of the labour that must be bestowed upon all such works, to give them the requisite perfection), that he re-wrote his translation *three* times; the style of the first appearing too refined, and that of the second, too simple. His friend Pascal, with that fine taste that distinguished him, advised him to lay it by for a considerable time, and then resume it—an excellent rule in composition.

† The Editor of the Christian Observer.—The writer gladly embraces this opportunity to offer a passing tribute—slight as is its value—to the much respected individual, whose name has long been associated with that work. Some of its earlier volumes are on his shelves—of a date when its pages were enriched by the contributions of the Macaulays, the Grants, and the Bowdlers of past days. In younger years, the monthly advent of its (then) *blue* cover was one of his greatest pleasures; and he never sees it now without interest. If the laborious and zealous Editor is now left to toil almost alone, and the aid he formerly enjoyed (especially from clerical brethren) has been transferred to newer, but certainly not *abler*, periodicals, let him be assured that his efforts in support of the sound doctrine and wholesome discipline of our common Church, are not unattended with the sympathies of many, who know how to value—in times when they are not a little needed—sound taste, extensive polemical knowledge, and pure and scriptural theology.

it not certain—that many who profess to belong to Reformed and Protestant Churches would, at the day of judgment, rejoice that their souls should be with those of Pascal and Arnauld, Fontaine (Nicole) and De Sacy, Fenelon and Quesnel ?”

The family of the Le Maitres was prolific in distinguished men. The eldest brother, Anthony, was an Advocate of high celebrity, whose pleadings, we are informed by M. Villemain, in a note to the last of the Provincial Letters—said to be his composition—are still extant in the courts. Early in life, and in the midst of a splendid professional career, he abandoned, to the surprise of all, his secular pursuits, and retired for the exercises of piety and meditation, to the walls of the Port Royal. “I have been busy,” he said, “in pleading the causes of others; I am now studying my own.” It was at first supposed that in renouncing the bar for the church he was looking for high preferment, but he wrote to the Chancellor that “he trusted God had given him grace to renounce ambition.” He had projected with much labour a work “of the Lives of the Saints,” intended to be purified from the superstitious legends of former publications—an example, which some modern, and *ostensibly* Protestant biographers of the same class would have done well to follow;—but in his dying moments, speaking of his disappointment in not being able to accomplish his object, he said, that “God, who inspired him with the desire, had not permitted him to carry it into effect, because the lives of the Saints ought to be penned by the hand of a Saint.” Such a work would, independent of other merits, have been a high intellectual enjoyment; for the specimen of his composition, above referred to, in the Provincials, shows him to be a master of acute reasoning and graceful diction, and affords a proof of the high cultivation to which the French bar had attained above two centuries since.

Another brother, also older than Isaac, was Simon Sieur de Sericourt. He had attained considerable distinction in

the army, but in the midst of his reputation he quitted the profession of arms, as Anthony did the bar, and joined the "recluses of the Port Royal, making over to the Society all his property. His favourite pursuit—for none of these good, but enthusiastic, and perhaps mistaken men, were idlers—became that of a gardener and agriculturist, in which he devoted himself to the severest personal toil, with the austerity and self-denial which were characteristic of the brotherhood.

No. V.

PERE ANNAT,

*Assistant of the Society of Jesuits in France; afterwards
Provincial; and Confessor to Louis XIV.*

THE preceding slight sketches of the leading members of the Port Royal would be incomplete without a notice of their opponent and persecutor Annat, the head of the Jesuits at the period of the Arnauld-controversy. He was born at Rourgus, in 1590, entered the Society in 1607, and took the vows in 1624. He became a teacher of philosophy and divinity at Toulouse; and his acquirements and talents attracting attention, he was invited to Rome, and speedily appointed to the office of Censor-General and Theologist to the General of the Society. In 1645, he was promoted to the office of Assistant in France; and on the death of Piccolimini, he was made Provincial of the Province of France. In 1654 he obtained the high distinction of Confessor to the King, which appointment he held till 1670, when age and infirmity induced him to seek retirement, and he died shortly after. His life and character exhibited a large measure of the usual qualities of the higher class of Jesuit leaders; he was irreproachable in personal conduct, politic, acute, an uncompromising sup-

porter of his church, a bitter foe to all opinions that deviated from her creed, and possessed learning and talent, but no genius. He wrote; but not a line of his is preserved or remembered; and little of him remains but the name; while the objects of his persecutions are embalmed in the love and veneration of posterity. A pleasing trait of his character is said to have been his disinterestedness, and marked abstinence from using the advantages of his high position for the advancement of relatives and friends.

No. VI.

THE DUKE DE ROUANNEZ.

(Extracted from a Memoir of Madame Perier.*)

M. de ROUANNEZ was the son of the Marquis de Boissy. His mother was daughter of M. Hennequin, President of the Parliament, and grandson of the Duke de Rouannez: his grandmother was sister of the Count d'Harcourt. He lost his father at the age of eight or nine years, and was placed under the care of his grandfather, who was a person destitute of religious principle, of a violent temperament, and little fitted to conduct beneficially the training of a young person. He committed his grandson to a tutor, as ill qualified as himself; giving him directions to bring him up with court manners, to let him even learn to swear, and in every way to acquire the habits common then to the youth of quality. Fortunately for him, he lost his grandfather when about the age of thirteen, and then became his own master. His mother was a well-disposed and simple-minded person, but not fitted to have the management of a youth of his age. Under all these disadvantages, however, he seems to have early imbibed

* Faugère's edition of *Pensées*, &c.—Appendix.

religious sentiments; his parts also were good, but he had little application to study. It is not certain at what age he was when he first made the acquaintance of Pascal, who resided in his neighbourhood; but he was much impressed with his piety and intelligence, and several times took him to his own residence in Poitou: in short his society became indispensable to him.

When M. de Rouannez was about twenty-two or twenty-three, Pascal having then entirely given himself to the service of God, and resolved to abandon the world, persuaded his youthful friend to enter into his views. His mind became deeply impressed as to his future course of life, and in about his twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year, he resolved, under the advice of Pascal and his friend M. Singlin, to set apart a period of time to seek divine direction for the purpose. This he did. Pascal was then his inmate: he appropriated to his use an apartment in his own dwelling, which he at all times commanded, although he had his own residence in Paris. At length, after much reflection, M. de Rouannez took the decided resolution to abandon the world. He announced his purpose to Pascal and Singlin; and told them that he should take an early opportunity to obtain the King's permission to dispose of his estates, and to retire into the Port Royal.

His determination being thus formed, and announced to his friends, a singular incident occurred to him. A few years before, when he had no thought of the present step, he became acquainted with a young lady of rank, and the richest heiress in France, Madlle. de Menus, who was not then of marriageable age. De Rouannez cast his eyes upon her as a suitable match; not doubting that he would be able to obtain her hand, as—the ducal rank being then rare in France—he was the only man of his own rank in the country that she could suitably marry. A few months after the young Peer had taken the resolution above described, some mutual friends suggested to the Count D'Harcourt the fitness of an alliance

between Mdlle de Menus, and his great-nephew. The Count entering into the plan with much satisfaction, at once repaired to M. de Rouannez, and accosted him thus: "Nephew, I have a communication for you, which will give you pleasure: we are going to propose for you to Mdlle. de Menus." Rouannez, much surprised, said: "Sir, you must be pleased to allow me a short time to consider of the matter." His uncle hereupon fell into a passion, and said, "Why, nephew, you must be a fool! Here have you been long looking out for this young lady; and are you not satisfied, now you are in a fair way to get her? What has put it into your head that you must take time to consider? Don't you know she is a woman of the first quality, and the richest heiress in the kingdom? You are an absolute fool!" De Rouannez, however, persisted in asking for time, and in about a fortnight, he announced to M. D'Harcourt that he had come to the determination not to marry. The Count fell into the greatest fury, especially towards his friend Pascal. The news soon spread through the Hotel de Rouannez, where Pascal still was; and in consequence the house-steward rushed one morning into his room, armed with a poignard, to destroy him. Fortunately he was not within, having left home, contrary to his custom, at an early hour. He was informed of the design conceived against him, and returned no more to the hotel. Mdlle. de Menus afterwards married M. de Vivonne.

M. de Rouannez persisted in his resolution, and a few years after sold his estates and paid off some of the incumbrances, although not the whole, for his grandfather had left them much involved. After that, his mother being still alive, he continued to live in society, although adhering to a religious course of life; but was disappointed at his sister's return to the gaieties of the world.

The above little narrative is, of course, given in substance as it stands in the original. But it is evident that this accomplished and excellent young nobleman was placed between two injurious

alternatives ; either, to remain in the demoralizing circle of aristocratical life, as it then existed in France ; or, as his devout friends urged, to renounce, not only the evils of the world, but the innocent and beneficial ties of life, and to abandon the duties of the high station to which Providence had called him. Happy that society in which a place may be found for the virtuous of the highest rank ! And thrice happy the faith, which knows how to reconcile the most exalted piety with blameless enjoyment, and with the due discharge of our responsibilities to our fellow-men !—(Transl.)

No. VII.

The following is the passage in Pascal's "Essay on the Passion of Love," which is referred to in the Memoir as indicative that he had conceived a secret and hopeless attachment for the fascinating and high-born Charlotte de Rouannez :

"Man in a state of solitude is restless and uneasy ; companionship is necessary to his happiness. He most usually seeks it in his own condition of life, as being that which affords the greatest facility for obtaining his object. But occasionally his views take a higher direction, and the flames of passion ascend to an *exalted* object, although he may be hopelessly restricted from the avowal of his wishes.

"When an attachment is conceived for a female of an elevated station, ambition may at first co-exist with love ; but the latter shortly obtains the mastery. It is a despotic passion, and admits of no rivalry ; it must reign alone ; every other emotion must subserve and obey its dictates.

"An elevated love is more suited to fill the heart of man than those more common-place feelings sometimes entertained for an equal in station : ordinary objects seem but to float on

the surface of a large capacity; it is the intenser emotions, alone, that arrest and dwell in the spirit."

The subjoined passages are yet more to the purpose:

"To love, without *daring* to reveal our passion, has its sufferings, but it has also its joys. Who can describe the delight of moulding every action as in the approving view of one, who is the absorbing object of our admiration! To study daily new methods of evincing our devotion, and to be as assiduous for her satisfaction, as if we were in the enjoyment of her unrestricted communication! How will the eye in a moment kindle, and as quickly lose its fire! And, although we are well assured that she who is the cause of all these emotions is unconscious of our feelings, who would desire to forego the secret joy that their fluctuations afford us? We could wish for a hundred tongues to reveal to the beloved object our thoughts; but as that privilege is denied us, we seek a substitute for it in the silent eloquence of action!"

"The first effect of genuine love is to inspire respect."

"The deepest attachment may often be conceived when the beloved object is *unconscious* of the passion; and the most inviolate fidelity preserved, when even our love itself is unknown."

These and other sentiments in this elegant production, do indeed furnish strong internal evidence that the portraiture of pure and elevated passion it presents is drawn from far deeper sources than a general knowledge of nature and the heart. They bear all the stamp of personal experience. It was a "love" probably that was "never told;" nurtured in the silent recesses of his own bosom; not, perhaps, to the last, wholly extinguished; but abandoned through hopelessness, or superseded by yet higher and nobler aspirations. Whatever it was, however, it is now gone down with his ashes to that oblivion, in which are wrapt many of the secret passages that have adorned or afflicted the feverish existence of genius and virtue! (Transl.)

No. VIII.

The following is a literal transcript of a series of memoranda, which have been found in Pascal's own hand-writing, on the margin of the manuscript copy of the beautiful fragment of his 19th Letter.

— “ Le jour du jugement.

— C'est donc là, mon père, ce que vous appelez le sens de Jansénius ; c'est donc cela que vous faites entendre et au Pape, et aux évêques.

— Si les Jésuites étaient corrompus, et qu'il fût vrai que nous fussions seuls, à plus forte raison devrions nous demeurer.

— Quod bellum firmavit, pax ficta non auferat.

— Neque benedictione, neque maledictione movetur, sicut angelus domini.

— On attaque la plus grande des vérités chrétiennes, qui est l'amour de la vérité.

— Si la signature signifie cela, qu'on souffre que nous l'expliquions, afin qu'il n'y ait point d'équivoque : car il faut demeurer d'accord que plusieurs croient que signer marque consentement.

— On n'est pas capable de ne pas croire, et on seroit coupable de jurer sans croire.

— Mais vous pouvez vous être trompé ? Je jure que je crois que je puis m'être trompé ; mais je ne jure pas que je me suis trompé.

— Se le rapporteur ne signait pas, l'arrêt serait invalide ; si la bulle n'était pas signée elle serait valable ; ce n'est donc pas

— Cela avec Escobar les met au haut bout ; mais ils ne le prennent pas ainsi ; et témoignant le déplaisir de se voir entre Dieu et le Pape

— Je suis fâché de vous dire tout : je ne fais qu'un récit.

It may be interesting to the reader to see a few more of similar memoranda relating to others of the Letters, which have been collected from manuscripts.

Pensées et Notes pour les Provinciales.

Lettres des établissements violents des Jésuites partout.

— Aveuglement surnaturel.

— Cette morale qui a en tête un Dieu crucifié.

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66) Il y a diverses voies pour y arriver. St. Ignace a pris les unes ; et maintenant d'autres. Il étoit meilleur pour le commencement de proposer la pauvreté et la retraite. Il a été meilleur ensuite de prendre le reste. Car cela eut effrayé de commencer par le haut ; cela est contre nature.

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Notes écrites de la main d'Arnauld. Contre-notes de la main de Pascal.

Ep. 16. Aquavivæ. De formandis concionatoribus, Tous les Pères pour les conformer à son imagination,

P. 373. Longè falluntur qui ad irrigaturæ. au lieu de former sa pensée sur celle des Pères.

Ep. 1. Mutii Vitelesci.

P. 289. Quamvis enim probè norim—et absolutum.

P. 390. Dolet ac queritur— Modestie.
esse modestiam.

La Messe. J'en sais ce qu'il dit.
Politique.

Par un malheur ou plutôt un bonheur singulier de la société, ce que l'on fait est attribué à tous.

Pour parler des vices personnels.

— Belle lettre d'Aquaviva, 18 Juin, 1611, contre les opinions probables.

St. Augustin. 282.

— Et pour S. Thomas, les lieux où il a traité exprès les matières.

Climaq. pour l. 277.

Et nouveautés.

Et ce n'est pas une excuse aux Supérieurs de ne l'avoir pas su, car ils le devaient savoir. 279. 194.

— Aquoquiez a confessé les femmes.

.....
Il est permis de ne point donner les bénéfices qui n'ont pas charge d'âmes aux plus dignes. Le Concile de Trente semble dire le contraire; mais voici comme il le prouve: "Car si cela étoit, tous les prélats seraient en état de damnation, car ils en usent tous de la sorte.

Et en un autre endroit, où il met les conditions nécessaires pour qu'un péché soit mortel, il y met tant de circonstances, qu'à peine péche-t-on mortellement: et après l'avoir établi, il s'écrie; "O que le joug du Seigneur est doux et léger!" (22.)

Et ailleurs: "l'on n'est pas obligé de donner l'aumône de son superflu, dans les communes nécessités des pauvres: si le contraire étoit vrai, il faudrait condamner la plupart des riches et de leurs confesseurs."

— Ces raisons là m'impacientaient, lorsque je dit au Père Mais qui empêche de dire qu'ils le sont? C'est ce qu'il a prévu aussi en ce lieu, me répondit-il, où après avoir dit; "Si cela étoit vrai, les plus riches seraient damnés;" il ajoute: "A cela Arragonius répond qu'ils le sont aussi; et Baunez ajoute de plus que leurs confesseurs le sont de même; mais je réponds avec Valentia, autre Jésuite, et d'autres auteurs, qu'il y a plusieurs raisons pour excuser ces riches et leurs confesseurs. (22.)

— J'étois ravi de ce raisonnement, quand il en finit par celui-ci :

“ Si cette opinion était vraie pour la restitution, ô qu'il y aurait de restitutions à faire.

O, mon Père, lui dis-je, la bonne raison !—O ! me dit le Père, que voilà un homme commode !—Mon Père, répondis-je, sans vos casuistes qu'il y aurait de monde damné ! O que vous rendez large la voie qui mène au ciel ! O qu'il y a de gens qui la trouvent ! Voilà un

Qu'avez vous gagné en m'accusant de railler des choses saintes ? Vous ne gagnerez pas plus en m'accusant d'imposture.* (Barré.)

— Je ne suis point hérétique : je n'ai point soutenu les 5 Propositions. Vous le dites, et ne le prouvez pas. Je dis que vous avez dit cela, et je le prouve.

— Vous me menacez ?

— Je vous dis que vous êtes des imposteurs. Je vous le prouve ; et que vous ne le cachez pas, et que vous l'autorisez insolemment.—Brisacier, Minier, D'Alby.

— Quand vous croyiez M. Puys ennemi de la société, il était indigne pasteur de son église, ignorant hérétique, de mauvaise foi et mœurs. Depuis, il est digne pasteur, de bonne foi et mœurs.†

— Calomnier, “ *hæc est magna cæcitas cordis.*”

— N'en pas voir le mal, “ *hæc est major cæcitas cordis.*” Le défendre, au lieu de s'en confesseur comme d'un péché, “ *hæc tunc hominem concludit profunditas iniquitatis,*” &c. 2. 30, Prosper.

— Ceux qui examinent les livres, je suis sûr de leur approbation. Mais ceux qui ne lisent que les titres, et ceux-là sont la plus grande nombre, ceux-là pourraient croire sur votre parole, ne supposant pas que des religieux fussent des imposteurs. (Barré.)

* Letter 11th.

† Letter 15th.

— Les saints subtilisent pour se trouver criminels, et accuser leurs meilleures actions. Et ceux-ci subtilisent pour excuser les plus méchantes.

— Jamais homme n'a eu si bonne cause que moi ; et jamais d'autres n'ont donné si belle prise que vous.

— Les gens du monde ne croient pas être dans les bonnes voies.

— Ne prétendez pas que ceci se passe en dispute : on fera imprimer vos ouvrages entiers et en français, et on fera tout le monde juge.

— Plus ils marquent de faiblesse en ma personne, plus ils autorisent ma cause.

— Vous dites que je suis hérétique. Cela est-il permis ? Et si vous ne craignez pas que les hommes ne rendent justice, ne craignez vous pas que Dieu ne la rende ?

— C'est péché de croire témérairement les médisances. (*"Non credebitur temeri calumniatori."* S. Aug.) *"Fecitque cadendo undique me cadere,"* par la maxime de la médisance.

— Mentiris impudentissimè.*

— Je suis seul contre trente mille ? Point. Gardez-vous la cour, vous l'imposture ; moi la vérité : c'est toute ma force ; si je le perds je suis perdu. Je ne manquerai pas d'accusations et de persécutions. Mais j'ai la vérité, et nous verrons qui l'emportera.†

— M. Arnauld et ses amis protestent qu'il les condamne en elles-mêmes, et en quelque lieu où elles se trouvent ; que si elles sont dans Jansénius il les y condamne ; que quand même qu'elles n'y soient pas, si le sens hérétique de ces propositions que le Pape a condamné se trouve dans Jansénius, qu'il condamne Jansénius.‡

— Il y a plaisir d'être dans un vaisseau battu de l'orage, lorsqu'on est assuré qu'il ne perira point. Les persécutions qui travaillent l'Eglise sont de cette nature.

* Letter 15.

† See these rudimental thoughts finely amplified in the opening of Letter 17.

‡ Letter 18.

No. IX.

I am tempted to transcribe the following passage from Pascal's miscellaneous "*Pensées*," which I believe has not before appeared in English, because, although it has no especial reference to any preceding topic in this work, it seems, with other principles of composition laid down by him, to furnish, in a great measure the key to the purity and force of his style :

"Eloquence is the art of expressing things in such a manner that, 1st, the persons addressed shall listen, not only without pain, but with satisfaction; and 2ndly, they shall feel an interest in the subjects discussed, and shall accompany them with beneficial reflections. It consists, then, in a correspondence aimed at, on the one hand, between the mind of the writer or speaker, and the feelings of those who are addressed; and, on the other, between the thoughts as they arise in the mind, and the language of which they are made the vehicle; all which supposes a profound study of the heart of man, to acquire a knowledge of its most secret springs, and to draw out the desired emotions by appropriate language. We ought to put ourselves in the place of those whom we address, and to make trial upon our own heart of any touching or forcible turn of discourse; in order to ascertain whether the one is calculated to affect the other; and thus be assured of carrying with us the sympathies of the hearer. We ought, as much as possible, to study simplicity and nature; to give no undue elevation to what is in itself low, nor to lower what is great. It is not enough, that a thought or an illustration be intrinsically beautiful; it must be appropriate to our subject, in which nothing ought to be excessive, and nothing deficient."*

* See remarks in M. Villemain's Essay on Pascal's style, &c.

Si mes lettres font condamner l'homme
à qui j'ai condamné de condamner tout
adieu, donnez j'en suis sûr
Vos amis et complices

J'ai cru que je ne devais pas
me voyer condamner, mais les gens
sont si près de moi, me font avec
amour, et les gens sont si
près

Je ne puis que corriger ou jurer
Hélas, malheur d'être adieu, j'en suis sûr.

Je ne puis que corriger ou jurer
Hélas, malheur d'être adieu, j'en suis sûr.
Je ne puis que corriger ou jurer
Hélas, malheur d'être adieu, j'en suis sûr.

Je ne puis que corriger ou jurer
Hélas, malheur d'être adieu, j'en suis sûr.

Gaspar

No. X.

Document entitled " Profession de Foi," found in Pascal's handwriting after his death.

" I love poverty, because Jesus Christ loved the poor. I value property, because it affords the means of assisting the distressed. I keep faith with every one. I do no injury to those who have injured me ; but I wish their condition to be like mine, in that I am susceptible of neither evil nor good, on the part of man. I seek to be just, true, sincere and faithful to all ; I have an *especial* tenderness towards those with whom Providence has connected me ; and, whether alone, or under the eye of my fellow-men, I perform every action as in the sight of God, who will judge them, and to whom I have consecrated all.

" These are my convictions ; and I bless every day my Redeemer, who has inspired me with them ; and who, out of a man full of weakness, misery, concupiscence, pride, and ambition, has formed one exempt from all these evils, by the power of his grace. To him be ascribed all the glory : in myself is nothing but wretchedness and error."

No. XI.

Writing found on the person of Pascal, after his Death.

Erroneously described as an "Amulet." See Memoir.

(Literally transcribed from the corrected copy of the original in M. Faugère's edition.)



L'an de grace, 1634.

Lundi, 23 Novembre, jour de St. Clément, Pape et martyr, et autres au martyrologe.

Veille de St. Chrysogone, martyr, et autres.

Depuis environ dix heures et demie du soir jusques environ minuit et demi.
Feu.

Dieu d'Abraham; Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob,
Non des Philosophes et des savants.
Certitude. Certitude. Sentiment. Joie. Paix.*
Dieu de Jésus Christ.

Deum meum, et Deum vestrum.

Ton Dieu sera mon Dieu.—

Oubli du monde et de tout hormis Dieu.

Il ne se trouve que par les voies enseignées dans l'Evangile.

Grandeur de l'âme humaine.

Père juste, le monde ne t'a point connu, mais je t'ai connu.†

Joie, joie, joie, pleurs de joie.

Je m'en suis séparé———

Dereliquerunt me fontem aquæ vivæ.

Mon Dieu me quitterez vous?

Que je n'en sois pas séparé éternellement.

Cette est la vie éternelle qu'ils te connoissent seul vrai Dieu et celui que.
tu as envoyé J. C.‡

Jésus Christ ———

Jésus Christ ———

Je m'en suis séparé; je l'ai fui, renoncé, crucifié.

Que je n'en sois jamais séparé.

Il ne se conserve que par les voies enseignées dans l'Evangile.

Renonciation totale et douce.§

&c.

* In another copy on parchment—"Certitude, joie, certitude, sentiment, vue, joie."

† St. John ch. xvii. ver. 25.

‡ Idem, ver. 3.

§ The parchment copy has these lines in addition:—

"Soumission totale à Jésus Christ et à mon directeur.

"Eternellement en joie pour un jour d'exercice sur la terre. (a)

"Non obliviscar sermones tuos. Amen."

(a) In the margin is the following Note in the writing of the Abbé Perier;—"On n'a pu voir distinctement que certains mots de ces deux lignes."

No. XII.

THE passage contained in the annexed Autograph is taken from a large collection of detached memoranda, published for the first time by M. Faugère, in the work already referred to, from the original manuscripts. This division of these fragments is entitled "Pensées sur les Jesuits," and the portion transcribed, as far as it can be decyphered, is as follows :—

"Si mes Lettres sont condamnées à Rome, ce que j'y condamne est condamné dans le ciel.

— Ad tuum, domine Jesu, tribunal appello.

— Vous mêmes êtes corruptibles.

— J'ai craint que je n'eusse mal écrit, me voyant condamné ; mais l'exemple de tant de pieux écrits me fait croire au contraire. Il n'est pas permis de bien écrire.

— Tant l'Inquisition est corrompue ou ignorante !

— Il est meilleur d'obéir à Dieu qu'aux hommes.

— Je ne crains rien, je n'espère rien. * Les évêques ne sont pas ainsi. Le Port Royal craint, et c'est une mauvaise politique de les séparer ; † car ils ne craindront plus et se feront plus craindre.

— Je ne crains pas même vos censures personnelles, ‡ si elles ne sont fondées sur celles de la tradition.

* See Provincial Letter, No. 17.

† Allusion is here made to the threats of dispersion which began to be directed against the Solitaries of the Port Royal. (Transl.)

‡ This word is written in an abbreviated form, and it is not certain that "personnelles" is the right expression.

PASCAL was interred in the Church of St. Etienne du Mont. Over his grave was placed the following Epitaph, written by AIMONIUS PROUST DE CHAMBOURG, Professor of Law in the University of Orleans. On the opposite page will be found an attempted paraphrase.

Nobilissimè Scutarii BLASII PASCALIS Tumulus.

D. O. M.

BLASIUS PASCALIS SCUTARIUS NOBILIS HIC JACET.

Pietas si non moritur, æternùm vivet,

Vir conjugii nescius,

Religione sanctus, virtute clarus,

Doctrinâ celebris,

Ingenio acutus,

Sanguine et animo pariter illustris;

Doctus, non Doctor,

Æquitatis amator,

Veritatis defensor,

Virginum ultor;

Christianæ moralis corruptorum acerrimus hostis.

Hunc Rhetores amant facundum,

Hunc Scriptores nōrunt elegantem.

Hunc Mathematici stupent profundum,

Hunc Philosophi quærunť sapientem,

Hunc Doctores laudant Theologum,

Hunc Pii venerantur austerum.

Hunc omnes mirantur, omnibus ignotum,

Omnibus licet notum.

Quid plura, Viator, quem perdidimus

PASCALEM

Is LUDOVICUS erat MONTALTIUS

Heu!

Satis dixi, urgent lachrymæ,

Sileo.

Ei qui benè precaberis, bene tibi eveniat,

Et vivo et mortuo.

Vixit An. 39 M. 2. Obiit an. rep. Sal. 1662. 19 Kal. Aug.

ΩΛΕΤΟ ΠΑΣΚΑΛΙΟΣ.

ΦΕΤ! ΦΕΤ! ΠΕΝΘΟΣ ΟΞΟΝ!

Cecidit Pascalis

Heu! Heu! qualis luctus!

Posuit A. P. D. C. mœrens Aurelian. Canonista.

The tomb of the illustrious BLAISE PASCAL.

D. O. M.

Beneath this spot rest the mortal remains of
BLAISE PASCAL.

If piety never dies, his memory will be immortal:
He was one

Whose life, devoted to celibacy,
Was sanctified by Religion, and eminent for Virtue.
Unrivalled in erudition,

Possessing unbounded intellectual power,
By descent, and by qualities of mind, alike illustrious:
Learned, yet not bearing the titles of Learning;
A lover of equity,

A Champion of Truth,
The avenger of slandered, unprotected, solitary Women;
Uncompromising foe to the corrupters of Christian morality:
In him

The Orator admired a model of Eloquence,
The Critic confessed the most elegant of Writers,
The Scientific, the profoundest of Mathematicians;
The Philosopher sought from him the deepest solutions of
the wonders of Nature:

His Theology was the praise of the casuist,
His piety the admiration of the devout:

Behold, then, the man, by all admired,
To all unknown,

And, now, revealed to all:
Reader! He whom we lament among the dead,

PASCAL,

Was once, Alas! LUDOVICUS MONTALTIVS.
What more need I say? Your tears reply.
My words are ended.

To the holy and prayerful, all shall be well,
In Death or in Life.

He died in the year 1662, Aged 39 Years, 2 Months.
Posuit, &c. &c. &c.

The stone bearing the preceding Epitaph becoming effaced by the feet of worshippers in the Church, another Inscription was placed on a Tablet adjoining, by M. Perier, his Brother-in-Law, in the following chaste and modest terms.

Pro columna superiori,
Sub tumulo marmoreo,

Jacet BLASIUS PASCAL, Claramontanus, Stephani Pascal, in Supremâ apud Avernos subsidiorum Curiâ Præsidis filius. Post aliquot annos in severiori secessu et divinæ legis meditatione transactos, feliciter et religiosè, in pace Christi vitâ functus, anno 1662, Æt. 39. die 19 Augusti. Optasset ille quidem præ paupertatis et humilitatis studio etiam his sepulchri honoribus carere, mortuusque etiamnùm latere, qui vivus semper latere voluerat. Verùm ejus hac in parte votis cùm cedere non posset Florinus Perier in eâdem subsidiorum Curiâ Consiliarus, ac Gilbertæ Pascal, Blasii Pascal sororis, conjux amantissimus, hanc tabulam posuit, quâ et suam illum pietatem significaret, et Christianos ad Christiana precum officia sibi et defuncto profuturo cohortaretur.

Before the higher column,
Under the marble tomb,

Lie the remains of **BLAISE PASCAL**, son of Stephen Pascal of Clermont, President of the Court of Aids in Auvergnë.

After a few short years spent in strict retirement, and amidst profound meditations on the Divine Law, he departed this life, calmly and devoutly, in the peace of Christ, on the 19th of August, 1662, and in the 39th year of his age.

His poverty of spirit and deep humility would have led him to forego all honours of sepulture, and in death to repose unknown, as he would have passed his life in privacy. Unable, however, to comply with this his desire, Florinus Perier, Councillor in the said Court of Subsidies, and Gilberte Pascal his beloved Wife, and the Sister of Blaise Pascal, have erected this Tablet, that by means of it, they might both commemorate his piety, and exhort all Christian persons to the holy duty of giving to him and to themselves the benefit of their prayers.

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